SILENT SCOT

CONSTANCE LINDSAY SKINNER

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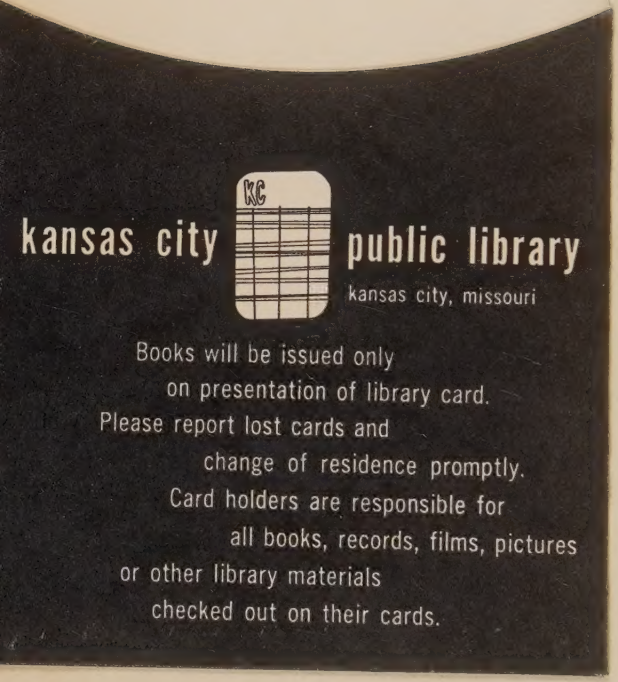
Skinner
Silent Scot, frontier scout.



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Sevier and his horse plunged down the steep incline.

(See page 120)

SILENT SCOT

Frontier Scout

BY

CONSTANCE LINDSAY SKINNER

Author of "Pioneers of the Old Southwest," "Adventurers of Oregon," etc.

New York
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1955

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SILENT SCOT

CHAPTER I

THE MOUNTAIN MAN

SILENT SCOT strained uselessly at the rope binding his wrists behind his back. And once more he swallowed the gorge of humiliation which, despite his philosophy, *would* rise every now and again, like an undigested potato.

A few hours ago he had been on his way from Bunyan's Town on the Pennsylvania frontier to join his father and mother and younger brothers in the Carolinian mountains. In deerskin clothes, cap and moccasins, with long-barreled rifle, carved powder-horn and leathern shot-pouch, he had slipped noiselessly along, the freest—and, he had believed, the wariest—lad in the forest. To be sure, he had veered rather far eastward, even to the ford of the Brandywine River; but he had done so purposely. There was a man at the ford whom he greatly admired. This man had visited Bunyan's Town a few years before and had given him praise and a bit of silver for excelling all the other boys as a runner, jumper and marksman. Silent Scot had not expected to speak with this man, who would be much too busy at present for friendly chat. No: he had

only meant to hide among the trees until he caught a glimpse of him—of George Washington in the uniform of an American general.

And now look what had happened to him! He had walked right into the camp of a British outpost. To think that such a disgrace should overtake him, Andrew MacPhail, whom the English and German Quakers in Bunyan's Town called "Silent Scot" because he could go through the forest, even in the dry midsummer, without a twig crackling under his feet, noiseless and swift as a hawk in air—Silent Scot whom men twice and thrice his sixteen years were proud to acclaim as the best scout on their section of the border! He swallowed again, with shame.

The tree to which they had tied him was a white birch. That was clever of them, he admitted. There was no chance of his getting free by fraying the rope on its smooth bark. Their lantern was on the ground, banked around with brush. He could barely see the faces of his two red-coated captors. He gathered from their conversation that they would do nothing more to him until a third man arrived, some one named "Ferguson." What would this Ferguson do when he came? Hang him, probably.

"Andy MacPhail," he muttered, "I'm tellin' ye the truth. I'm not so verra proud of ye!"

He wondered what time it was; not far from dawn, he thought. His chances of escape were slim enough now; after the light broke they would be even slimmer. His disgust threatened to choke him.

He held his breath suddenly, every nerve taut. His sense of hearing, keener than that of his guards and trained to distinguish among the vibrations of the woods, had caught a sound he knew was not made by breeze or rabbit. He heard it again, the faintest swish. Then a man stepped into the dim, narrow radius of the lantern. The two British soldiers sprang up and saluted. They spoke in low tones, but Silent Scot heard the words "rebel spy" twice. He cogitated. Rebel? Oh, yes, he was a rebel; there was no insult for him in that word. But spy! That had an ugly sound. No brave man liked that name. If they had said "Scout"—but spy! Well, whose fault was it that he was being insulted? His own! Hadn't he walked jauntily into the very arms of these insolent redcoats at dusk? His shame and rage boiled over.

"Come an' peck me off the bark o' this tree, ye two red-breasted woodpeckers, an' I'll make ye eat that word for a worm!" he roared at them.

The newcomer snatched up the lantern, hooded it in his scarf and held it up to the prisoner's face. Silent Scot saw a fold of the scarf under the tiny disk of light; it was patterned in plaid. The sight of that Highland tartan stirred him, almost made him forget his anger. He leaned forward and peered sharply into Ferguson's face. Dimly he saw tight, stern lips and a prominent nose in a long, lean, hard face, and eyes that looked black yet somehow seemed to burn like live coals. They were the eyes of a Highland Scot, with a fiery zeal in his soul. Andy

had seen them before, like that; the eyes of a mountain preacher exhorting his flock in exaltation, the eyes of a kilted bard chanting old war ballads with the old frenzy.

"You're Scotch," Ferguson said abruptly, after a searching survey of the tall, rangy lad with bronzed and ruddy skin, blue eyes, a shock of light yellow hair like a huge corn-tassel and a wide, innocent, good-humored mouth.

"Ay, but that's nothing against me nor yet 'tis nothing against the Scotch." Andy spoke casually, as a man who knew his own worth.

"A Highlander, too."

"Oh, ay, and that does no harm to the Hielanders, neither."

"You told me that when you doubled all the s's in 'red-breassted woodpeckerss.' The Highland blood comes out in the s's when a man's in a rage." A flicker that might have been meant for a smile passed over Ferguson's face.

"I'd not be speakin' against the Hielanders if I was you, Mr. Ferguson—seein' ye're one yersel'," Andy said in dignified rebuke.

"How do you know that?" Ferguson asked quickly. There was no trace of Scotch accent in his speech.

"An' why wouldn t I know it, seein' ye stuck yer plaidie in my face wi' the lantern?" Andy asked truculently.

"So I did. You're a sharp lad to have noticed that."

Now, if Ferguson had spoken sarcastically, Andy would not have minded. He could use sarcasm himself on occasion with telling effect. But it was only too evident that Ferguson was not being sarcastic. No; he, Silent Scot, was being sincerely praised for seeing what was directly under his nose! He, Silent Scot, whose eyes were like a lance for keenness; who could read the subtlest signs of his forest world more swiftly and accurately than his Indian teachers; *he* was being called "sharp" because he had observed a handful of thick woolen goods thrust close to his eyes! It was disgraceful! He swallowed twice, unable to speak.

"My men say you're a rebel spy, and you say you're not. But we'll soon see. It will be in this letter they took from your jerkin." Ferguson sat down on a log, with the lantern beside him, and read the paper which the soldiers had seized in searching their prisoner. He looked up presently. "Lad, this seems to be a letter from one Robert Marvin —and a Quaker judging by his 'thees' and 'thous'— to one Duncan MacPhail saying that his son, Andrew, is going home because the debt is discharged. I'll thank you to tell me the meaning of it. And, mind you, no lies!" he added harshly.

"I've no need to tell ye lies, Mr. Ferguson," Andy answered with what dignity he could muster so soon after the degrading praise of his sharpness. "The letter is written by an honest Quaker man in Bunyan's Town to my father in Carolina. When my father went south he owed Mr. Marvin a debt

an' hadn't the money to pay it. So he left me with Mr. Marvin to work out the debt. An' now 'tis paid an' I'm goin' to my father."

"So you say, my lad; and so does the letter say. But this bit of country here is not on the road to Carolina." Ferguson rose abruptly and held the lantern up to Andy's face again. "What were you doing here?" He ripped the question out sharply.

Not wishing to answer without due consideration, Silent Scot sneezed deliberately, twice.

"Oh, ay; 'tis not precisely on the road, nor yet 'tis not so far off the road. Ye're right in what ye say, Mr. Ferguson." He spoke slowly and meditatively while he thought quickly. Perhaps these men did not know how close Washington and his army were. He must be careful. "But when a man's findin' his way by the sun at dead o' night, an' in a strange land beside, 'tis likely he'll wander an' come out where he never wanted to be. An' that's precisely what's happened to me, Mr. Ferguson. Tied to a tree like a poor fool of a collie dog that's been chasin' sheep," he wound up bitterly.

Again the faint, swift flicker that might have been a smile went over Ferguson's face.

"Ay, my lad. You've sat yourself down in a platter of trouble. The rebel army is not far off; and dawn will bring fighting. And it is less than an hour to dawn. Mind you," he said harshly, "if you'd been a rebel and a spy I'd have hanged you to yon tree without pity. But I can see you're nobody but a simple country lad, who knows

nothing at all. And that's well for you, Andrew MacPhail."

"Ay," said Andy huskily. He, Silent Scot, scout of scouts, called a know-nothing! He swallowed hard.

"Ay, dawn will bring fighting." Ferguson's voice deepened suddenly with passion; his intense eyes, fixed on Andy, looked as if they did not see him but flamed toward some splendid vision beyond him. " 'Tis a great day you'll be seeing, lad! The king's loyal men will drive the rebels before them like chaff before the wind. Oh, would God had given me a hundred lives! I'd fling them on a hundred swords to keep Britain's honor clear." He swung away abruptly. Andy felt little quivers through the roots of his hair, as when the kilted bards sang.

"He's a strong man, is Ferguson. His eyes burned into me like shot," he admitted in grudging admiration. He could catch a few words, here and there, of Ferguson's orders to his men, but they conveyed no meaning to him. Presently the redcoats saluted and disappeared into the darkness. He could hear their clumsy feet for some moments, going toward the river. Ferguson came over and loosed him from the tree, but left his wrists tied.

"Sit on this log with me, lad. You'll be tired of standing. Tell me, now; where were you born?"

"In Aberdeen near Braemar; for my father was one of the shepherds carin' for Lord Mar's sheep."

"Aberdeen, you say? I'm from Aberdeen myself! Lord Pitfour was my father—the old lord. Lad, it's a grand thing to be born with hills about you.

And, if I could choose, I'd say, let me die among hills. I've seen many places, but there's none bonnier than Aberdeen, though it is long since I left it. I was twelve years old when I ran off to be a drummer boy for the king's men in Flanders. Seven years we fought the French; and I grew from drummer boy to soldier."

"Ay, the Seven Years' War. They had it over here, too. I've heard Mr. Marvin tell about it."

"And since then I've been about the world with scarcely a look at Scotland, and always with a sword in my hand," Ferguson went on as if Andy had not spoken.

"A sword," Andy repeated, "I don't think much o' swords." And he added innocently, "Ye should learn to shoot, Mr. Ferguson."

Ferguson looked at him quickly; his eyes kindled, and the stern gravity of his face was broken for an instant by that humorous flicker.

"Lad, if we had but a clear day before us and no foes to fight, I'd be pleased to match you at shooting!"

"Oh, ho!" Andy laughed softly. "Ye'd be a verra foolish man to try it, Mr. Ferguson! For I'm not braggin' when I tell ye that the old men of Bunyan's Town, where I come from, say there's never been a lad in Pennsylvania could match me but Daniel Boone. An' there's no man twice my years to-day can stand up beside me at shootin'."

Ferguson sprang up, and darted into the shadows and as swiftly back again with a rifle in his hands.

"Take a look at that," he said, passing it slowly in front of the lantern and turning it so that Andy could see every part of it.

"I never saw a gun like that," Andy said at last slowly. " 'Tis shorter in the barrel than mine. A verra pretty gun."

"Ay, lad, and a quick one. I can load, fire, and reload in half the time it takes with any other gun. And she shoots straight."

"Where did ye get her?"

"Lad, I made her!"

"What's that you say?" amazed.

"I designed this gun, Andrew. And she was cast for me in the arsenal at Woolwich. The King himself would ride over to see me fire her. He'd come with generals and admirals and sporting gentlemen and grand ladies, too, just to watch Pat Ferguson with rifle or pistol hitting every mark he aimed at. The King could tell you how he's seen me aim at a robin on the fence, toss my pistol in the air, catch it, and shoot the robin's head off. My eye and hand are as sure as that. You say you're not bragging to tell me you're the best marksman in Pennsylvania. Well, lad, I'm not bragging when I tell you that Pat Ferguson is the best marksman in the British Army. And maybe that means the crack shot of the world, for we're better shots than the French or the Germans. Do you still want to match me at shooting?"

"Ay," said Andy stolidly. "For I can see 'twould be a match worthy o' me."

Ferguson slapped him on the knee.

"That's fine! You're a proud lad, and that's what I like," he exclaimed heartily. "I hope we'll meet, and shoot, in a happier day."

He set the rifle aside and extinguished the lantern. In the gray light, whitening rapidly now, Andy could see a wide, forest-fringed meadow like a green apron thrown off by one of the hills, with the Brandywine, a twisted silver band, running about the edges of it. He saw a rabbit start and, with little sidelong leaps and darts through the long grass, make for a clump of brush. A meadow lark rose, shaking the dew from her wings. Her thin, golden thread of song hung above his head for an instant as she passed, soaring, over Ferguson's lookout. There was a flash of sky blue, like a garland of lupins whipping through the air, and a score of bluebirds slanted over the meadow and the softly gleaming river and were gone from his sight.

Andy looked about the camp carefully and decided that Ferguson had not done so badly with it. Naturally a British soldier, even though a Highlander, could not be expected to show so much intelligence about such things as an American frontiersman. It was an excellent site, at the woods' edge midway on the incline of a hill; but the trees were not the best for a hiding place. They were mostly birches, growing rather well apart; and their sheer trunks of white and silver gray were conspicuous in themselves and tended to show up anything of a different color near them. Ferguson had recognized that peril

and had piled cut willows among the trees so that they would look like a natural growth of underbrush to any one viewing them from the other side of the meadow; but Andy felt sure that they would not deceive him. *He* would know, as soon as he saw them, that they had no roots in the ground, and that they were bundles of twigs and not whole bushes. He knew the ways of growing willows. If *he* had made that breastwork the enemy could not have told the difference without laying hands on it. His self-respect, so sorely downed during the past night, began to mount again.

Ferguson came to him with a rope in his hand.

"Andrew MacPhail, the fortune of war has made you my prisoner; but that's nothing against your dignity as a brave man," he said formally. "I believe there's no harm in you, but I'd be false to my duty if I took chances with you. So I'm obliged to bind you to the log so that you can't make a stir or rise up and show yourself." He stooped and quickly made Andy secure. "The rebels under General Washington are lying in the woods yonder. And their scouts will be peering like hawks at every spot of brush. This is the day that will see the Rebellion put down. And I'm praying 'tis I will fire the first shot. For 'tis likely they'll send out an officer and a man or two with him to reconnoiter. But he will never ride back."

His burning, gloomy eyes were fixed on Andy again as if they did not see him but something beyond him. He wheeled away and dropped on his

knees behind the willow breastwork, his rifle in his hands.

The brilliant yellow light of the September sun, rising now over the eastern knolls, made the heavy dew of the meadow sparkle like the jewels in some royal crusader's breastplate, and the river tide shimmer like brandished steel. With his heart beating tumultuously and his eyes strained on the wall of trees opposite, Andy watched silently.

What should he do? he asked himself. Rather, what *could* he do? Shout? Ferguson would kill him in a wink. Well, that wouldn't matter so much, he thought, if his shout would do any good. But the danger was that the American officer might think it a signal from one of his own scouts and come on instead of dashing back. His sole hope was that there were frontier scouts like himself over there. It was second nature with them not to show themselves erect in the open; in war, they distrusted every clump of trees and every field of long grass. They knew how the Indian scout would crawl on his belly a few inches at a time, lie still in the calms between the gusts of wind or the little breezes, then creep on again while they blew and made the whole surface move so that the shaking of the grass in his part of the field would not be observed. They knew how the Indian warriors would crouch under cover, noiselessly, for days, if need be, waiting for the settlers to grow careless and come outside the palisades so that they could shoot them down from ambush. A frontiersman might even now be snaking through

the grass at the far end of the field. If so, before he got within range of Ferguson's rifle, he would know that the willows of the lookout never grew out of the soil in this fashion. Officers were fine gentlemen, Andy believed. Likely they came from Philadelphia and Richmond and Boston, and had no training for this sort of thing. Reconnoitering was a scout's work. Surely they wouldn't let an officer try it?

He saw movement where the trees seemed to be thinnest. Then a man rode into the field and paused. Three other mounted men followed him. They came on a little way together and paused again. Two of them now veered to the left, and the third to the right. The man who had emerged first cantered briskly across the meadow directly toward the lookout.

"I can't yet tell a rebel's rank by his uniform. But from the proud look of him and his horse, I'd say yon man riding to his death is no less than a colonel," Ferguson said grimly.

The American officer came on twenty yards and reined in. He was mounted on a fine bay horse, Andy saw; and he wore a dark green and blue uniform with a high cocked hat. He looked about him; with face upturned, he swept his glance slowly over the hillside. The boy in the lookout knew that face. He had traveled miles out of his way just to see it once again.

Washington! Andy's heart died within him and a dumb cry strangled in his throat. It was Wash-

ington himself who sat there on his horse in the sunlit meadow, a living target for the crack shot of the world.

There was nothing that he could do, nothing. He looked at Ferguson and, frozen with horror, watched him raise his rifle and take aim. An eternity of agony rolled by while he waited for the shot. Then, scarcely able to believe his eyes, he saw Ferguson's finger withdraw from the trigger, saw the rifle lowered. What had happened? He darted a glance at the field. Washington had swung his horse round; his back was toward them now. Slowly he trotted away. He was still well within range, an easy mark. Again Ferguson raised his rifle and again lowered it without firing. Silently both occupants of the lookout watched the rider rejoin his companions and, with them, disappear into the forest. Ferguson sprang up, with a sharp word to some one who was coming through the coppice.

The whole wood back of them was astir now. Andy caught the flare of red coats among the green leafage. Vaguely he realized that the men, who had captured him the night before, had returned; that Ferguson was talking while one of them cut the rope that had bound him to the log. He heard something about being taken back behind the lines. Then he was moving, being led off through the forest. It didn't matter. He could think of nothing but the picture of Washington less than a hundred yards from Ferguson's rifle, offering first his breast and then his back to the crack shot of the world,

who had lowered his gun without firing! Why? The question beat at his brain like hail on oak leaves. Why hadn't Ferguson fired? He had said that he wanted to fire the first shot of the day; he had expected an officer to ride out, had lain in wait eager to kill him. Ay, and he had called Washington, as he came out of the forest, "Yon man riding to his death!" Then why hadn't he shot him? Was it a miracle, such as saved Moses and Elijah? Had God stricken Ferguson blind, or peopled the meadow with ten thousand angels in chariots of fire about Washington? If there had been fiery chariots there, Ferguson would have seen them, whoever else was blind. Andy felt sure of that. There was a strange spirit in Ferguson, like the spirit in Highland preachers and bards, making them see things not visible to common men. Chariots and horses of fire! Ay, that would be a grand and glorious sight to hear a man tell about!

"God, don't let Ferguson get killed till I've a chance to ask him," Andy prayed fervently.

A half mile farther on, his guard led him by a detour along the crests of the low, rounded hills; for the army was sweeping in full force across the lower ground. It was the first large army on the march Andy had ever seen. For a time he forgot the chariots of fire and the great man whom God had saved. He stared, breathless, at the monstrous melée; teams of men, bent till their brows were near to the dust, like Israelite slaves under the Egyptian lash, dragging the great guns; horses plunging; flags

streaming, gold lace and bayonets sparkling; bare knees bobbing rhythmically as chips of new wood bob on the dark eddy of a stream, and plaidies waving, as a Highland regiment passed; the skirling of the bagpipes and the shriek of bugles, the sullen, sinister thudding of drums and of thousands of feet and hoofs on the dry ground; and red coats like thousands of autumnal berries, snapped from miles of bushes and lashed on by a mad gale.

His guard led him sharply down the far side of a knoll to a large farmhouse, with outhouses and cornfields. The ground was gashed deep by heavy wheels, and the broken cornstalks looked as if one of the hills had rolled over on them. All about were the black smudges of extinguished camp fires. The ruinous sight shocked Andy, who had suffered lean winters when other red warriors had devastated the border fields.

"Ye've made a grand mess of yon farm!" he said, in tones of severe reproof. The guard gave him a sour look and shoved him into a shed, where four soldiers were playing cards.

"Here's a boy that got lost going to Carolina. Lieutenant Ferguson's taken a liking to him. Here's his gun and hunting knife and his powderhorn and shot pouch." He cut the cords about Andy's wrists. "Ferguson says give him some food and let him sleep." Then with a scowling, "Mind you, rebel; no tricks now," he was gone.

Andy did full justice to the food, but he was too excited to be sleepy, in spite of the fact that he had

been awake all night. However, he lay down presently and closed his eyes; because he wanted to think, and to plan. Especially did he want to plan, for he could not linger in this pleasant spot. He had to go to Carolina. He rolled as close as possible to his confiscated weapons and drowsed with a busy brain. How he loved that rifle, and the powder-horn which his Indian friend, Tuleko, had carved for him! But it was hopeless to think of regaining them unnoticed. He sighed. But there was his hunting knife. Certainly he should be able to slip that inside one of his leggings. He could make his hunting knife serve his needs all the way to Carolina. Even before his twelfth year, long before he had owned firearms, he had killed birds and small game with a sapling cut and sharpened at one end by his knife, with its bunch of roots at the other end to give it weight and balance. Thrown tomahawk fashion, with sure aim, it could be relied on to keep a traveler from hunger. With his knife he could cut and whittle a fire stick of hickory; and so make a camp fire every night to cook his food or to dry his clothes after swimming a creek or tramping in the rain. He knew how to make fire as the Indians made it for centuries before ever they traded beaver skins for the white man's matches. Yes, Silent Scot would be free from troubles if he could only get hold of his knife. He snorted, and tossed an inch nearer to it, and flung out an arm. A soldier jumped up and bent over him, putting a hand on his shoulder. Silent Scot

half opened his eyes, then closed them again as if the lids were too heavy to stay up without propping. The soldier went back to his card game. The next time he snorted and tossed, one of the card players made a jesting remark but did not come to look at him. After a while they paid no attention.

Throughout his pretended slumbers he could hear the roar of cannon. It sounded to him as if all the thunders of the sky had gathered over the ford of the Brandywine to split the world in twain. There were nearer sounds, too—dashing hoofs, messengers probably, he thought, and feet tramping by, men bearing the wounded to shelter, perhaps. Later on he heard wild shouts. What was that? The American Army in retreat? His guards rushed to the door, yelling for more news. Andy retrieved his knife and hid it inside his legging. The British winning! That made it more urgent than ever for him to get to Carolina, deliver his letter, and then go as scout with the American Army. They needed scouts, he felt sure, after what he had seen to-day! Washington himself obliged to do scout duty! If he, Andy MacPhail, had been over there with the American soldiers he would not have permitted that! As he considered it, his thoughts reverted to the incident which had so puzzled them. Why had Ferguson lowered his gun without firing?

He was sitting up, yawning, and still apparently drowsy after a comforting supper, when the man who had brought him in stepped into the doorway and beckoned to him.

"Ferguson wants you."

Andy jumped up and followed him to the farmhouse. He would have his nagging question answered now, he thought with a thrill of excitement. He would make that fierce, glum man answer!

"Dr. Giffen, here's the lad he sent me for," Andy heard his guide say to one of a group of men in the kitchen.

"Very well, Horton, take him in," the doctor said, with a casual glance at Andy. Then, as they moved off in the direction of a door that stood ajar, he stopped them. "You must not excite him, my boy. He is in a bad way."

"Ye mean he's wounded?" Andy asked. "Is he hurtit bad, doctor?"

"Yes, his right arm is shot to pieces."

"His *right arm!*" Andy repeated, aghast; and added slowly, more to himself than to the doctor, "Him that was the crack shot o' the world."

"He will never shoot again. It is a harder blow for him than for most men. He'd have taken death instead gladly if he'd been given his choice."

Andy made no reply. Habitually silent-lipped as well as silent-footed, whatever few words he used in his daily life went from him now. He saw that Dr. Giffen admired Ferguson and was grieved for him. But no doctor could understand as he, Silent Scot, understood what this blow meant to the man in there. Wasn't his own heart sore hurt because he must slip away this evening and leave behind him the rifle he loved, his dearest friend, the com-

rade of his long hunts and of all his daring adventures in the red man's country? But, some time, he would own another rifle. He would fire many a straight and pretty shot. Ay, there was no joy in the world like that; and he would have it again! But Ferguson, who had made that new, magical, quick-firing gun; Ferguson, the crack shot o' the world—— He, Silent Scot, was doubtless the only other man living who understood just what that shattered right arm meant to Pat Ferguson.

"Wait outside, Horton," Ferguson said. Andy had an impression of white linen swathings, of colorless lips tightened to a thin line, of damp black hair, of black eyes smoldering deep in a gray, drawn face. He saw a bit of fringe, wet and stained, hanging down from the rolled plaidie under Ferguson's head. He had no idea what he would say to Ferguson, except that, some time before he left the room, he would ask a certain question which, if unanswered, would give him no peace all his life long. But he *did* know what he would *not* say. He would not say one word about the shattered arm. That was too vast a grief for pity; words would be an insult. Ferguson would know what he felt and why he made no mention of it. For they two were not only crack marksmen, brothers of the rifle clan, they were Scots and Highlanders, the same silent, strong people—mountain men, both.

"Good evenin', Mr. Ferguson," Andy said politely. "I'm verra pleased to see ye again."

"And I am as pleased to see you again, Andrew

MacPhail," Ferguson replied with similar courtesy; "I sent for you to give you back your letter—now that I know there is no harm in it." He extended it to him with his left hand. "And I wanted to ask you a question."

"Now, that's verra strange," said Andy, "for I'm wantin' to ask ye a question yersel'."

"Yours will keep. Lad, did you know who the officer was who rode toward us this morning? I'm asking, because when I looked at you, after he'd gone, your face was white as frost."

Silent Scot's expression did not change. He was master of his face, as more than one befooled Indian warrior could have told. He thought fast. He liked Ferguson; they were friends. He would have liked to speak truth to him from an open heart. But he must remember that, in this war, they were on opposite sides, foes. If he admitted having recognized Washington, Ferguson might believe that he had been scouting for the Americans when he stumbled into the British camp. In that case, he would order him well guarded. No, he couldn't take the chance of that. He must hurry on to Carolina; because, as he saw it, his first duty was to deliver the old Quaker's letter to his father, to let him know that the shadow of debt—so obnoxious to Highland pride—no longer darkened the honor of the MacPhails. After that, he would be free to offer his services as scout to the nearest Patriot army. He must not run the risk of being clapped into a British prison till the end of the war. He

had seen to-day how badly the Americans needed scouts.

"'Tis not a bonnie sight to see a man killed, Mr. Ferguson," he said evasively. "An' him sittin' so grand on a fine bay horse! Didn't ye say he was no less than a colonel? There's not so many grand colonels in Bunyan's Town, where I come from, Mr. Ferguson." Andy smiled disarmingly, his little blue eyes twinkling. Apparently the wounded man was satisfied with his answer, for he did not press the question.

"I know who he was, lad. That was General Washington himself."

"General Washington!" Andy echoed with excellently simulated amazement. "And ye didn't shoot him! *Why?"*

"I didn't know him then. I found out later who he was."

"But when ye thought 'twas a colonel, Mr. Ferguson, and ye'd told me not ten minutes before how ye hoped to fire the first shot, and how yon man was ridin' surely to his death——" Andy's words rushed out pellmell now. "What did ye see, man? Tell me that! *What did ye see in the field around him?"*

"See?" Ferguson repeated, puzzled. "Why, nothing."

"Then why didn't ye shoot?" His voice quavered and the color rose in his cheeks. Ferguson's drawn face was touched for an instant with a mild surprise.

"Didn't you see, lad, that, just as I was aiming at his breast, he swung round and showed me his back? Well, 'tis not a pleasant thing to shoot an unoffending individual in the back, who is acquitting himself very coolly of his duty. As he rode off, it came to me that maybe I was forgetting my own duty in letting an officer of those rebels and traitors go free to plague the King's loyal men later on the field. And I leveled at him again, but the idea disgusted me."

"An' if ye *had* known 'twas Washington?" Andy asked eagerly.

"Then maybe my duty would have been so plain I couldn't have escaped it. Washington, the most dangerous rebel of them all!" he said broodingly, the sullen, fiery look kindling in his eyes. "But I am not sorry I didn't know. I've never shot my foe in the back, Andrew. And I think no man's fit to be called a soldier that will foul an honest gun with a cowardly shot like that. No, *I'm not sorry I didn't know!*" Ferguson's eyelids closed and his lips tightened quickly to still a twitch of pain.

For some minutes Andy did not speak. He was thinking hard. At first he had been disappointed that Ferguson had not seen glorious chariots of fire. But now? Well, he didn't know. Never to foul your gun with a coward's shot—there was something splendid in that, too.

"I'm verra proud to be acquainted wi' ye, Mr. Ferguson," he said presently, with dignity, "for I can see ye're a verra fine man."

Ferguson opened his eyes. "I'll say the same to you, Andrew. I wish I could let you go on to your father, lad," he said kindly, "but that is impossible. Though we're friends now, and both Aberdeen men, too, I couldn't give you back your gun. And how would you get to Carolina without a rifle to hunt with? Poor lad, you'd starve."

"Ay, ay. Fancy a poor, simple lad like me goin' to Carolina wi'out a rifle!" Andrew said noncommittally, wagging his head. "But I'm thinkin' ye should take a bit o' sleep now, Mr. Ferguson. So I'll be sayin' good night."

"I'll see you again in the morning," Ferguson said. "You know the way back to your quarters? If not, there are scores of men about to direct you—and to prevent you from running away to the rebels. Tell Horton I want him."

Andy went out. He found Horton in the kitchen and gave him Ferguson's message. The yards were full of men and horses and baggage. Through the gathering dusk little cook fires dotted the field with flame. His trained eye noted quickly the positions of inanimate objects which would afford shelter. On the whole the prospect was as promising as he could have hoped for. Ferguson had had no fear that he would try to escape from a yard full of men. But Andy much preferred a yard full of men who were not watching him, to one or two who were!

It took him nearly half a hour to get beyond the camp—snaking his way under and behind wagons, behind tents, through deep ruts in the fields, to the

river. He skirted the ford to the bank of the smoother, deeper tide beyond it. There he paused and made sure that his letter and his knife were safely disposed of and protected. Ferguson might send men after him. If they found his trail and followed it, they would lose it here—in water.

He was sorry that he would not see Ferguson in the morning; but he had to go to Carolina. The sooner he got to Carolina with his letter, the sooner he would be able to join the army and prevent Washington from taking risks like that! He hoped he would meet Ferguson again some day. That hope was a prophecy, thought Andy did not know it. He would meet Ferguson again in scenes of adventure such as the boy slipping down the low bank to the Brandywine's edge that night could not have even imagined.

He meditated briefly on all that had happened to him—and looked on the bright side.

" 'Tis no' so great a shame to me, after all, that they caught me," he told himself; "but if I hadna got away from them—— Oh, ay; *that would have been verra disgracefu'!*"

Yes, on the whole, Silent Scot had justified his name and his fame as the impeccable scout. Now he was on his way to Carolina without a care on his mind. A tiny yellow moon peeped at him over a hill. Stars flickered dimly on the river, lighting a path for him. Andy dropped noiselessly into the water and swam downstream, comfortable and contented as a beaver.

CHAPTER II

RUNNER-ON-THE-WIND

SILENT SCOT lay among the tall weeds behind a clump of service-berry trees. His chest heaved. He was tired. He had traveled many miles that day, and perhaps half of them at a run, over rough ground, up and down rocky slants of the mountains, through stony creeks. He had not gone so very far from his starting point, either, for he had made wide detours and he had even doubled back on his tracks and then worked forward again at a higher elevation—in the desperate effort to throw the man, who was following him, off his trail.

Three days before, in the valley of the upper Yadkin, as he was breakfasting off a rabbit, he had looked up suddenly and seen a row of feather tips behind a stone. They had disappeared so quickly that he might well have doubted the evidence of his eyes, if he had not tested his vision too often in his sixteen years to belittle it. His keen, far sight was one of the reasons why Andy MacPhail was a crack shot and a prime scout. No, he had seen feathers, but feathers worn as no bird wears them.

"It takes more than tail feathers to make a turkey," he informed himself, very alert, "an' I'm thinkin' the bird ahind yon rock has a red skin."

It occurred to him at once that the man behind the rock might be thinking the same of him; for Andy, too, was wearing feathers. His bright yellow hair was stained and drawn up into an Indian knot on the top of his head, and the knot was stuck through with turkey quills; his cheeks and brow were streaked with vermilion and ocher. Even an old friend would have been obliged to peer closely past the white and yellow circles round his eyes to recognize Andy MacPhail.

Andy reasoned that if the Indian were a lone hunter, such as he himself now appeared to be, he would do one of two things: either step out making peace signs and come over to pass the time of day, or go off in another direction after his meat. Of course, he might be a scout for a war party; for the Indians were already adding to the problems of the border settlers in the Revolutionary War. But Andy did not believe that a band of red warriors could have been traveling along the edges of his route for several days without his having become aware of them. Cover was not an easy matter in these fall days, when most of the trees were bare.

"Yon feathered fowl acts verra mysterious," he commented. He ate his broiled rabbit with one hand, so to speak, and held his rifle in the other.

It was a splendid rifle of English make, an army piece; but perhaps it is scarcely correct to call it "his." In fact, our last glimpse of Silent Scot showed us the chief of scouts slipping away from the British camp at the Brandywine ford—Chadd's

Ford, Pennsylvania, as written on our maps to-day —with no other weapon than his hunting knife. Where and how, on his lonely and hazardous journey from the Brandywine to the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina, had Andy MacPhail become possessed of this beautiful sample of the gunmaker's art? Had one of the Indian woodland deities, the natural friends of all good scouts, stepped out of the trunk of a sycamore and handed it to him? Not exactly; at least, not exactly in that way!

With the quietness and stealth for which Silent Scot MacPhail was noted, he had borrowed this pretty gun from a Tory settler who, with his ruffianly sons, had taken Andy on, by the collar, as a field helper and kept him at work for over a week. This episode had delayed the scout on his journey to his family in Watauga in what we call Tennessee, but which was then the Overmountain district of North Carolina. And such delay was serious; because autumn was fast fading into winter, and the high-flung guard of the Appalachians must be pierced before the snows came down. It was not the delay alone, however, but the despicable character of the Biddo family which had made Andy feel, as he expressed it, "verra aggravated" by his enforced association with them. Wearing as stupid and helpless a look as possible, and inwardly seething with anger and wounded pride, he had drawn water and picked squashes and chopped wood while old Ma Biddo, a toothless, brawny, evil-eyed virago, kept watch over him with a rifle.

It did not soothe his feelings to know that the Biddo men spent the days, while he labored, in gorging like hogs and snoring; nor that, at night, after they had tied him in his bed, they slunk off, by the light of the moon, dressed and painted like Indians, to pillage the unprotected homes of men who had gone to join the Patriot army. For the matter of that, as he learned, they robbed the homes of absent Loyalists, too, though they posed as Loyalists themselves. When they came home in the morning to the breakfast he had helped Ma Biddo get, they bragged of their treachery as they exhibited the loot from the farms of neighbors who trusted them. They were sullen, murderous, cowardly bandits; and Andy, esteeming himself far too good for such company, had familiarized himself in detail with their habits during the hours when they and their weapons were at home, so that he might take his leave and a gun as quickly and safely as possible. The chance he had planned for came one morning when the men were gorging and drinking and boasting with Ma Biddo over the breakfast indoors, and Andy was cleaning their guns and sharpening their knives in the yard. He had dropped three of the guns into the creek, and taken over his shoulder Dred Biddo's army rifle, the best in the family arsenal. He had also taken Dred's powderhorn and shot pouch, the walnut stain for his hair, his dyed feather headdress, and the Indian paints for his cheeks. It was only the day before that Andy had discovered where the Biddos kept their

Indian make-up—under a mat of straw in the barn.

Though Silent Scot would never think of the Biddo family without feelings of intense dislike, let it not be supposed that he had any intention of stealing from them. Far from it. He promised himself that when the war was over he would most certainly return the rifle. He would come back and make the Biddos give up all they had stolen, punish them roundly, and possibly hang them if they had murdered anybody on one of their Indian raids. Oh, yes; he would return Dred Biddo's rifle!

After his first glimpse of the feather tips, Andy lay still for an hour, watching, but saw no more of them. The lone hunter seemed to have gone on about his own business. Andy wriggled out of the covert and continued his journey.

He made good time that day. It might have been midafternoon when, turning suddenly, he saw a lean, brown body streaking through the leafless white birches behind him. Then and there Silent Scot realized that he was being trailed.

Why would one lone Indian hunter trail another lone Indian hunter all day? Andy asked himself, and answered that he wouldn't.

"That'll be Dred Biddo all dressed up in his dad's feathers," he mused. "An' I make no doubt at all he wants his gun—*which he'll not get this day!*" he added grimly.

Without question, those Biddos were a nuisance! Still, they were not overintelligent; not "canny," as

he called it. Remembering carroty-haired Dred's heavy jowls and dull, stupid eyes, Andy felt sure of throwing him off the scent before sundown, even though he was handicapped by his own ignorance of this country and by Dred's familiarity with it. He sincerely hoped that he would not have to shoot him.

It might come to that, of course; for he did not intend to be interfered with again on his way home. He told himself that there had already been too much of that sort of thing, beginning with his capture by the mountain man, Patrick Ferguson of the British Army, on the day of the Battle of the Brandywine. Every time he thought of that event, the most thrilling in all his young career, he lamented the rifle and shot pouch which Ferguson's men had taken from him and the beautiful powder-horn carved for him by his Indian friend, Tuleko. Since leaving the British camp, other obstacles had been thrown in the path of his progress. He had been obliged to lie low for days at a time to avoid Indian war parties; and groups of white men, too, whose intentions he did not know. On his way through the Shenandoah Valley he had asked for a night's shelter sometimes at a Patriot homestead, and found there only women and children facing the oncoming winter with frightened eyes. And he had remained for a few days and helped them by laying in a stock of meat. Deeply as he mourned his own gun, he had not been tempted to borrow one of theirs. For his own needs he had made out thus far with his knife as intelligently as any Indian

ever did with his flint before guns and steel blades came into the land. Then one evening he had walked up to the Biddos' door, and into trouble and shame. Days of delay! No, he could not afford to be stopped again. Somewhere, not so far ahead of him now, was the Indian pass of which an old man in the upper Yadkin had told him. He would know, the old man had said, about where to look for the path leading into it by the position of two peaks and a scarred line along the rocks. His safety demanded that he throw Dred Biddo off his trail before he reached it.

"I'll lose ye easy enough, my lad; for ye're naught but a verra stupid villain," he had muttered as he trotted on after his second glimpse of the owner of the feathered head.

But he had not lost his pursuer easily enough. He had not lost him at all; not that day, nor the next.

Now it was nearing sunset of the third day, another wearisome day of useless maneuvering. Andy lay panting among the weeds, perhaps within a stone's throw of the pass, for high above his hiding place and slightly south of it he could see the two peaks and the scarred line made by Indian fires or lightning. And he knew that somewhere below, in the shadows of the gully, Dred Biddo was crawling toward him, or kneeling behind cover with cocked rifle waiting for him to show himself. It began to be borne in on him that he would have to shoot Dred Biddo. That would be a pity, he thought

regretfully—for two reasons. In the first place he was not a killer; he always preferred to use craft instead of brute force in dealing with dangerous men. And—this second reason was even more important—the shooting of his foe now would ruin the dramatic scene which he had staged in his mind and which we may entitle "The Return of the Rifle." He had pictured himself, as the leading actor in that scene, riding to the Biddos' farm with a dozen brave men and true and delivering himself of the following speech—this, at least, was the speech he had finally decided upon to-day after having composed and discarded several others:

"Mr. Dred Biddo, ye murderin', war-painted villain, here's yer rifle. An' when these braw an' bonnie lads—that I make no doubt ye're verra glad to see—ha'e well whippit ye, an' well hangit ye, for yer sins, I'll be pleased to return it to ye!"

Shooting Dred Biddo now would spoil that, of course.

Andy turned over presently and peered down into the gully. To his surprise the trailer was in full view. He stood leaning against a tall rock and was apparently scanning the hillsides. Suddenly he ran a few yards at a quick pace, turned, and dashed back so swiftly that Andy gaped in watching him. Then he leaped, like an arrow shot straight upward from a bow, and landed on the top of the tall boulder. For a second he stood poised there, outlined clearly against the burning sunset sky; then he jumped down into the shadows again. He jumped

just in time. A shot cracked through the air, and a tiny flurry of white dust went up from the crest of the boulder where the bullet had struck.

"That canna be Dred Biddo," Andy muttered. "I saw his legs, an' they could never do what yon man's legs did." He puzzled over the rashness of the man, who had offered such a good chance to a hidden foe with a gun.

"No wonder I couldn't lose him," he thought. "He's faster than me. It might be he could run fifteen miles to my ten any day o' the week. I never knew but one man could do so high a jump, an' it so fine to see, too; an' he's many a mile off, in Bunyan's Town. Ay, yon man, whoever he is, minded me o' Runner-on-the-Wind." He sighed, saddened suddenly by the realization that Silent Scot and Runner-on-the-Wind might never again follow the deer nor tread the trading trace together.

No, that graceful, arrowlike runner and jumper was plainly not Dred Biddo. Most probably he was an Indian. But why had he trailed Andy MacPhail? Andy had not been able to see whether the man's feet were naked as well as his body. If they were, he reasoned, then this man was an Indian who had suffered some shame and had gone naked out of his tribe under the vow not to return until he had killed a man and thus won back his right to stand again among the warriors.

"If 'tis that ails him, he'll stick around me as close as conscience or the smallpox; an' he'll be as hard to kill."

He peeked out again after a few minutes. There was no sign of life in the gully. The Indian had vanished. He continued to watch until the last flaming rays of sunset, which had seemed to cling round the topmost western peaks, released them and passed, leaving a clear pale golden sky hanging high over a dark emerald ravine.

Andy barely heard the faint sound which made him turn, as a red-skinned hand dropped downward over his shoulder and fastened on his fingers where they clasped his gun. He jerked his head back and to one side violently, in a blind, instinctive move to dodge tomahawk or scalping knife, and looked into the face of a tall young Indian of possibly eighteen years of age. Silently they stared into each other's eyes, while Andy felt as if all the blood in his body were rushing to his head and pulsing along his hair roots. His gun slipped to the sod as the red-skinned hand was withdrawn and the owner of it threw himself down beside him. Andy smothered a shout and flung himself on the young Indian, who met him halfway. The two of them rolled over locked in a jubilant and strangling bear hug.

"Tuleko!" he gasped.

"Um-m!" Tuleko grunted. They squatted side by side, panting, and grinning broadly at each other.

"What are ye doin' in these parts?" Andy asked when he could get his breath. He rubbed his forefinger along his windpipe delicately. "Did Robert Marvin send ye wi' a message?"

"No." Tuleko straightened back on his haunches,

having satisfied himself apparently that Andy's grip had not broken any of his ribs.

"Then why did ye come? For ye've had many weeks of walkin' an' runnin' an' hidin', an' on a verra dangerous road!" Tuleko's appearance here, several hundred miles from his home and kin, was a miracle for which Andy had no explanation.

"Thee go 'way. Tuleko's heart get sick. Tuleko go find Silent," Tuleko said simply. Then he added, "Thy tribe now my tribe. Where thee go, Tuleko go."

Andy's eyes glistened as his lashes drooped over them. This was indeed Tuleko, his always stanch and loyal friend, with his straight speech and his quaint part-Quaker pidgin English. His heart pushed up into his throat, choking him. He had always cared more for Tuleko than for the other boys in Bunyan's Town. It had hurt to leave him. Yet he had done it. He had left his Indian friend and set off to join his own family in the south. But what had Tuleko done? Tuleko had left his only white friends, the kind Quakers who housed and fed him during the winters; he had cut himself off from his own father, his brothers and his tribe, and followed Andy MacPhail. Tuleko had given up everything else he had in life, and discounted every peril of the long road, just to be with him once more. The lump rose in his throat again and there was that queer, tight feeling round his heart that seemed to send the blood out through his body stingingly.

"He's a braver man an' a truer friend than me," Andy thought. But he had to let Tuleko guess what he felt. Silent Scot was altogether Scotch in his natural reserve, and in his conviction that there was something sacrilegious in talking about the deeper feelings of a man's heart.

"Well, no doubt ye were verra surprised when ye caught up wi' me. There's not many could do it," was what he said, coolly, when he did find his voice at last.

"No. I am Runner-on-the-Wind," Tuleko answered calmly in his own language, by way of explanation. After a brief silence, he went on in Delaware: "You know the Wind Spirits are Tuleko's friends. There was a big white moon and a good wind on the hill that night when my heart was so sick. I took the white feathers of a pigeon, and I stood on the hill and scattered the feathers on the wind; but six feathers I put in my hair. I prayed the Wind Spirits to make my path straight and clear like the wind; and to put the wind under my feet that my feet might run upon it and be swift. The Wind Spirits took the white feathers from my fingers and flew away with them. By this I knew that they had heard me. So the next day I went with my white friends to the meeting. And I said to the Quaker God also all that I had said to the Wind Spirits. And I knew that the Quaker God also had heard me; because he sent a wind that shut the door with a great bang."

Andy nodded slowly, in silence. He was very

deeply moved; but he was also perplexed. Tuleko had brought up the one subject on which his friend positively could not understand him. A dyed-in-the-wool Presbyterian himself, Andy thought that one religion—preferably, of course, Presbyterianism—was enough for any man. Tuleko, however, had two; and, as Andy knew, he was equally devout in both. On their fishing trips together at the opening of each season, Tuleko always made a religious offering of the first fish caught. In the same manner, he offered the heart of the first deer killed on the autumn hunt. He observed certain other rites, sacredly performed by his tribe from the beginning. When the snow fell he moved into Bunyan's Town, took up his abode in the Marvin household, adopted the ways and speech of the Quakers, and was indefatigable in his attendance at the meetinghouse and in his efforts to assimilate the Quaker doctrines. With another slow shake of his head Andy solemnly acknowledged to himself, for at least the twentieth time in half as many years, that the matter of Tuleko's religion was wholly beyond him.

"Why thee shoot?" Tuleko asked presently.

"I didna shoot," Andy answered meditatively. It was true that some one had fired a shot into the gully, and apparently at Tuleko; but he had forgotten that for the minute in his excitement over the unexpected reunion with his friend.

"Somebody shoot," Tuleko grunted. "Tuleko not know sure if Silent that man me run after. Him

look like Injun. Tuleko, think, Silent see me run, jump, him know Tuleko. So me run, jump. Some man him shoot."

"Ay, that's true. An' I mind now 'twas from verra high the shot came, from up there back o' me. Now 'tis possible Dred Biddo's followed me an' is hidin' up above an' thought 'twas me in the gully. The pass is up there somewhere; an' if 'tis Dred Biddo waitin' for me yonder, there'll be trouble. Ay, I make no doubt at all there'll be trouble."

"What thee say?" Tuleko wanted to know.

With sternly frowning brow, Andy narrated the humiliating incident of his meeting with the Biddos, "a verra objectionable family." Tuleko comfortingly advised him not to mind. When the thick leafage of summer once more lay over the land, offering ambush all along the trail and even to the doors of the farm, he would come back gladly with Andy, and, together, they would rush into the house at dawn and scalp all the Biddos.

"I thought ye were a Quaker," Andy said reprovingly. "The Quakers dinna believe in scalpin'."

Tuleko hastened to explain that the inconsistency was only apparent.

"Tuleko say we come back summertime. All Injuns make war only summertime when trees got plenty leafs. Tuleko wintertime, Quaker; summertime, Injun."

Andy gave it up. He would *never* understand Tuleko's religion.

They knew that because of the killer hiding above they must plan their moves carefully; so they went back, as they usually did in grave moments, to the Indian tongue, which Andy knew pretty well. They were likely to misunderstand each other when they used what both of them would have called "English." Andy's English was spattered with Scotch idioms and had the strong accent of a man brought up to speak Gaelic. Tuleko had learned his English from the Quakers, and particularly from the Welsh Quakers; and besides its "thees, thous, and thys," it was ornamented with a few intimate Welsh words pronounced, like the English ones, with a guttural Delaware accent. For instance when Tuleko said "good night" in *English,* he said "nos-da," which is *Welsh!* Only he pronounced it "noghs-da." On the whole he and Andy had found Delaware the safest language for them when discussing any problems where complete understanding was vital.

Tuleko argued that if the pass were under that scarred peak to the south then the shot had not come from the pass; or it would have hit the rock at a different angle. It must have come from directly above their present position. To the eye, the mountain wall there seemed to be sheer, solid, and impregnable; but evidently it wasn't, since a man was now sitting on some jut of it with a rifle in his hand. They could not take the chance of having him pick them off with a shotgun as they entered the pass. No; he was a person who had to be settled!

Andy twisted a turkey quill in his hair round slowly and meditatively.

"'Tis usually best to let sleepin' dogs lie," he said doubtfully. He was convinced that the man was Dred Biddo, and he did not want to settle Dred Biddo—not yet!

"Him no sleep," Tuleko pointed out. "Him bark all same gun. Him bite all same bullet." Then, dropping into Delaware again, he said that he did not think the man was Dred Biddo, because he was sure that no other man could have trailed Andy these past days without having been seen by himself. Whoever that killer up there was, until they had rendered him harmless their lives would not be worth two slaps of a beaver's tail.

They had at least an hour more of light in which to reconnoiter. They dropped down into the gully, keeping close under its west bank.

They soon found that the gully wound southwestward toward the foot of the scarred peak. But to follow its line directly would give the man on the northwestern side too good a view of them. They decided to scale a high mound, which jutted out from the north hill, and crawl along among the bushes on its ridge. From the ridge they immediately discovered another gully very narrow and deep, lying between it and the north mountains. It seemed to offer the two young travelers a safe, secreted camp site for the night. They worked their way down into its dark, chill depth. Andy was thinking that this place was very like the pathway of

the ghosts in an Indian story when he heard Tuleko, who was in the lead, chanting an Indian song in a tone barely louder than a whisper:

"Go the magic journey,
Now the sky is empty
Of all sun and star shine.
Come, we lose our footing;
Night no friend of ours is——"

The low chant ended in a sharp grunt.

"What is it?" Andy sprang forward as Tuleko stopped abruptly and bent over, pulling some bushes aside.

"Dead man!"

The body of a frontiersman lay among bent and broken twigs. His brow was discolored and his face badly scarred. Andy looked for bullet or knife wound and found none, but his hands encountered a paper tied round the man's neck. It was a letter, evidently, though the light was too dim now for him to read it. He put it into his pouch. They looked about for the man's rifle, and, not finding it, nor knife, nor shot pouch and powderhorn, they were puzzled. Tuleko advanced the opinion that the man had been robbed of his weapons and killed by a blow on the head. Andy nodded, and added that he also thought the man had been killed up above somewhere and his body thrown down, because of the broken bushes where he lay. He felt the more convinced of this when he discovered a hat about twenty feet away on the top of another cluster of

undergrowth, as if it had drifted there from the falling body.

"Bad man up there," Tuleko grunted, peering upward.

"Ye think he did it, eh?" Andy, too, glanced up at the cliff above them. He could see, against the pale green evening sky, a black ledge of rock, like the outer rim of a shelving roof. It hung almost directly over them.

"Tuleko," Andy said presently in Delaware, "this man was crossing the mountains carrying a letter to some one. He wasn't a young man, for there's gray in his hair and beard. I believe he was coming from the west, where we are going, and that he was coming by another trail—a trail that only some of the Indians know about, and a few men, like this one, who lived with them and hunted with them before there were any white settlers on the other side of the mountains. Perhaps he was expecting to meet an Indian runner in the gully. And maybe that is why the bad man up there shot at you; because he had killed the first messenger and didn't want you to go back and tell the settlers he hadn't arrived, and start a search for him."

Tuleko nodded and answered:

"I believe it is very dangerous to go up there. But I believe it is more dangerous not to go."

It was almost as if the dead man's hat had fallen on that particular clump of brush to be a way mark; for the gap, which was the mouth of the trail, opened there. Weeds and low bushes across it indicated

that it had been little used of late; but it was a good trail and not too narrow, even for horsemen.

Andy's knowledge of this trail was to be a leading factor in deciding a crucial battle of the Revolution three years hence; but, being no prophet, only a keen and cautious scout, he was not foreseeing that event as he and Tuleko pushed upward in close single file, slowly and noiselessly. The thickening shadows, as twilight deepened into night, made their journey perilous but also protected them. The killer on the rock would not fear visitors in the dark. He would be off guard. The boys wanted to see him first!

They had reached the sharp ledge, which had overhung them in the second gully below, when both scouts stopped simultaneously and held their breath with surprise. Both had seen the same thing at once—a ship's lantern set on a flat rock in a dugout to illuminate the labors of a man who knelt, with his back to them, digging with his fingers in the soil. Back of the rock with the lantern on it was a wooden ladder with knotted rungs. The ladder led up to a rude platform which roofed the dugout. It was from the platform, level with the top of the sheer cliff, facing east, that the man must have fired at Tuleko. The cliff served as the eastern wall of his house. North and west it was walled with deerskins. The earth and rock bank of the trail where the boys stood made its south wall. They looked down, through blueberry bushes, from about twelve feet above the floor of the dugout. Andy

noted a deerskin hammock hanging between stout sticks, a broad-seated chair of deerskin and hickory, a wooden plate and bowl in a cleft of the rock wall, a huge, rudely shaped skin bottle for water, a stone ax head bound with thongs upon a wooden shaft. A rifle leaned against one wall; and over it hung an odd knife, with a wide, long curved blade. Andy had no acquaintance with sailors and did not recognize the cutlass, the hunting knife of seamen. The floor was covered with black bearskin rugs. It looked like a very comfortable house, Andy thought. The stone slab used as an ax head told him that this man had no intercourse with white men or Indians—or he would have traded deerskins for a metal ax. How did he get powder and lead? Andy felt chill, thinking how the man had replenished his stock that very day. Perhaps that was his usual way—to pick off some lone hunter in the pass below and then collect the dead man's ammunition!

The man rose and came to the stone table with a skin bag, not over a quart size, but evidently heavy, held in the largest and hairiest hands Andy had ever seen. He was about medium height, but his chest and shoulders were very broad, and his arms were long. His head was overlarge and bald to its high-peaked dome, where sparse, grizzled, greasy hair still clung, enough of it to braid into a short queue no thicker than a rat's tail. His wrinkled skin looked like leather. A scar ran the length of one cheek. A deerskin patch covered one eye socket. From the other side of his broad, flat nose

bridge, a large eye of a curiously light reddish brown color, and very prominently set, glimmered like a hot ember. He was old, probably nearer seventy than sixty, and he moved as if his joints were rheumatic. He sat down in the deerhide chair and poured the contents of the bag on the table, a flood of jingling yellow pieces.

If you think that either scout's heart leaped at the sight of English guineas and crowns, you mistake. Gold coin was little seen on the frontier and meant less. Pelts were the frontiersman's money; he bought with them weapons, ammunition, salt, iron, etc. Gold could do no more for him. Tuleko possibly did not know what the bright round metal was. Andy was more interested in the man, and in planning how best to overpower him suddenly before he could get hold of his rifle or his cutlass.

"Foxes have holes; foxes have holes," the old man muttered. "Ay, and sharks, too." He nodded smilingly, and showed a few old yellow teeth at both sides of his jaw. But the smile disappeared as a gust of wind went lightly through the dugout, and he quickly shielded the flickering lantern with his broad, hairy hands.

"Steady, my pretty light! You wouldn't go out now and leave Old Tom Shark in the dark, would you?" he spoke in a wheedling tone. "Nay, nay, my pretty light, you wouldn't let the ghosts in on poor Old Shark?" He ran his fingers through the yellow heap, and went on talking to himself. "How do the ghosts get up here from the sea of a windy

night? And walk off the ledge, too, as if 'twas a plank! You'd think there was sea water enough on the Spanish Main to hold 'em down. Burn steady, now, my pretty light. Bears will come scratchin', but who's afeared of bears? Not Old Tom Shark. Never seen a bear's ghost yet." He chuckled. "Ay, but men are different—foolish and pryin' an' restless, dead or alive. Likely his ghost, the man that dropped over the ledge this mornin', will be walkin' soon, tryin' its sea legs. Ah, there! Steady, my pretty light!"

Now, if Andy had been a clerk in the British government office at Charleston during several years past, he would have known that a reward of a thousand pounds awaited any man who would deliver to justice a certain sea pirate named Thomas Shark or One-Eyed Shark, whose list of crimes fouled several large sheets of white paper. Thomas Shark, said the official documents, with his ship and crew, had finally been captured by an armed merchantman which was towing her prize into Charleston harbor when, in the dead of night, the pirate sloop caught fire, or was set afire by One-Eyed Shark who had somehow wriggled free of his rope bonds. He was seen making off in a boat just before the fire reached the powder kegs and the pirate sloop leaped up with a roar and dropped back and down to the bottom of the sea. Where he had landed, if indeed he had landed at all, no one knew. The pious hope in the breasts of governors, merchants, and honest skippers was that this villainous,

gold-hungry old shark of the commercial sea highways was dead. But they almost sifted the very sands of the southern coast in the search for him. They hunted for him for years. But they never thought of looking for him inland, never dreamed of searching the mountains. Cunning Tom Shark had known they wouldn't! He meant to hide for a few years longer in the hills—he had lived there six years already—and then, clad like any frontiersman, tramp into a coast town, sell his deer hides, and take passage for the sunny West Indian isles again. He had gold enough to buy a plantation in Jamaica and live like a lord in his old age. But Old One-Eye, who had always mobbed with a crew of fighting, roystering men, on ship or ashore, had not counted on the silent loneliness of the hills. It had done something to his mind—it had brought the ghosts of his victims to him in the night.

Andy, ignorant of the terrible history of Tom Shark, saw only a rheumatic old man, who was probably as crazy as he was wicked, and who ought not to be a very difficult problem for two strong and agile young scouts. With his mouth close to Tuleko's ear he whispered his plan. It was very simple. He would crawl upon the platform and scratch like a bear. Almost certainly that would lure the old man up the ladder to kill the bear—he must need lots of bear fat for the lantern if he kept it burning all night! As Shark started up the ladder, Tuleko would leap into the dugout and grab him from behind and seize his rifle.

"Mind you don't have the muzzle pointed up through the ladder hole when I'm jumping down it," he cautioned. " 'Tis no' my nature in general to get so close to two laddies scufflin' for a loaded gun."

While Andy scratched and sniffed loudly and padded about on the roof, Tuleko watched the old man. When he saw One-Eye tiptoe for his rifle and then start up the ladder with it, he jumped. Andy, watching Tuleko from the roof, waited till he saw him leap, with his rifle held safely high in air; then he darted back from the hole. But Old Shark was less rheumatic than he appeared; and neither boy had counted correctly on the degree of speed with which the old sea rover could swing up a ladder. One-Eye was on the roof before Tuleko could catch him. He followed to find Andy struggling helplessly in the iron clutch of Shark's long, powerful arms. The pirate, who had dropped his gun, had the scout lifted from the floor, ready to dash his head on the rock before tossing his body over the cliff, when Andy shot his legs up and shut them like springs round his adversary's hips. They rocked and swayed perilously near the edge of that long, sheer drop. Tuleko lost no time in whacking One-Eye's hard, bald dome with the butt of his rifle. The long arms loosened their grip, and Andy sprang clear, while Shark crumpled to his knees.

They dragged him down into the dugout, dazed but not badly hurt, and tied him to his hammock post with deer thongs. They found his larder in a

hole in the cliff and cooked a supper of deer's meat. They needed the table to eat from in comfort, so Andy swept the coins carelessly into the bag and tossed it back into its hole, while the old pirate strained at the hammock post and cursed him horribly. It was an eerie night the boys spent in Captain Shark's crow's nest. Sometimes one slept while the other watched, but for most of the night they talked, and paid little attention to One-Eye's gusts of rage. Light snow flurries drifted into the dugout. Sometimes Shark screamed at the boys not to let the lantern go out. Once he slept; and when he woke his one red eye stared at them with surprise, that tempered slowly to a sort of wistfulness, as he mumbled that it was a long time since he had slept in the night time!

He roared with rage again in the morning when they marched him off between them on the whitely powdered trail, with his hands tied behind his back —and left his golden treasure in its hole because it was too heavy to lug along, and they had to make time to avoid being caught in the heavy snows. He told them, in his blind fury, who he was—One-Eye, the master; Tom Shark, captain, and a king of the seas if ever there was one! Oh, but the mighty were indeed fallen! To be treated in such fashion! Two blasphemous brats, they were! Tuleko looked back once and grinned. He was breaking trail. He carried Old Tom's empty rifle with his own under his arm. In one hand he held an end of the stout hide thong that went round Shark's waist. Andy,

Washington had swung his horse around . . .

(See page 14)

behind the pirate, held the other end. He also carried the cutlass. Knowing nothing of the "Spanish Main" or "Jolly Roger" he did not even guess what the old man was talking about!

"A king of the seas ye may be, old man; an' yer gold lawful come by on the water, as ye say. But a' that's nought to Andy MacPhail," Andy said sternly. "To Tuleko an' mysel' ye're only an aggravatin' piece o' bad luck an' a loss o' time. I'd leave ye in yer dugout if ye weren't such a murderin' old cock ye canna be trusted. Ye'd shoot me in the back from yon roof! Ye should be verra grateful to me for takin' ye out o' these hills; for ye'd sure die alone here before spring." After a pause he added very solemnly, "An' I may as well tell ye, Mr. Shark, though I ask yer pardon if I judge ye wrong, but the fact is I dinna believe, *in my heart o' hearts,* that ye got that bagfu' o' gold *in honest trade!*"

One-Eye, the ancient sinner with a royal price upon his head, turned and stared at Andy in dead silence for a long minute. Incredible as it seemed, he saw that this boy was not jesting; he was serious! Shark's red eye flamed like a spark blown upon, his big head jerked back, his whole body shook, and he laughed, he shouted, till the hilly walls echoed with his mirth.

"Oh, ho!" he gasped. "'Tis long since I've laughed. My pretty lad, I could love you for the way you've made Old Shark laugh!"

Andy, who never much enjoyed being laughed

at and who, on this occasion, entirely missed the point of the joke, trudged on in the lofty silence of a man insulted by an inferior and considering it beneath his dignity to notice it.

Their last morning on trail, just after they broke camp, he remembered the letter. As they followed a stream that twined the foot of Roan Mountain, he read it, slowly and with effort, for he was no scholar. It was addressed to Charles McDowell and was signed John Sevier. Neither name meant anything to Andy; but, the first being Scotch, he instinctively approved of McDowell. Sevier was warning McDowell of Indian unrest fomented by Chief Dragging Canoe and suggesting that McDowell visit him at his home on the Nolichucky River for a conference. Then he thanked him for passing on the information which some spy had brought McDowell from Charlotte—to the effect that one called "Ferguson" had been selected to round up the Back Country Tories and enlist them.

Ferguson was a common Scotch name and, while Andy's thoughts went back briefly to the mountain man, he did not connect him with the Ferguson of this letter; because he remembered him as he had left him three months ago, lying prone with a shattered right arm. It wouldn't be Patrick Ferguson the British were going to send into Carolina—a man who could never fire a rifle again.

Suddenly from a silvery bend of the stream, between the flanking peaks, he saw the Watauga settlement. One of those log houses held his father,

mother, brothers! His blood raced, pounding at his pulses and stinging his lids with salt. He yelled and plunged down the slope. Tuleko caught the infection, whooped wildly, and sprang forward beside him. Neither lad even heard the frantic imprecations of the old pirate as he was dragged and bounced along after them. Gone, like past storm-flashes from a sky grown clear, were the memories of all Andy's great adventures—of Ferguson, of the Biddos, and even of One-Eye, now galloping unnoticed in the rear. Silent Scot, chief of scouts, was only a happy boy coming home.

CHAPTER III

THE WOLF OF THE BORDER

It was a bright morning with the sweetness of wild flowers in the air. The full sun glistened on the dash of waters visible through the gaps in the woods and sparkled on the vivid green leaves of the sycamores. Even the hill trail felt friendly under their moccasins as Silent Scot and Runner-on-the-Wind went down from Braemar, the MacPhails' cabin on the headwaters of the Nolichucky River, toward the smithy in the valley. Like the horses they were leading, they lifted their heads every now and then and sniffed in the fragrant, inspiriting air.

Tuleko's pony was a red piebald, a rangy, unbeautiful, swift creature with an unpleasant eye for any one but his master. Possibly he consented to bear the small red-headed boy now on his back only because Tuleko had placed him there. His name was Ahyuni, a Cherokee word, which signified that his natural disposition related him to the wolf family. Tuleko had bought him a few months before from the Cherokees in the town just south of Cumberland Gap.

Behind Ahyuni and not too close to his heels

Andy walked, leading his own horse, a huge, clouded gray animal which had something the look of fog or a wraith drifting among the trees. Andy had consumed half a day in trying to decide on a name for him. And after naming and then unnaming him again after all his family and his friends in turn, so that none of them might feel slighted, he had finally called him by the name of the river and the battle where he had experienced the most thrilling adventure of his young career. On Brandywine's back sat another small red-headed boy, as much like the other as two tiger lilies on one stalk.

These two urchins together constituted the youngest MacPhail. They were twins, six and a half years old now, and Andy had not known of their existence until he rushed up to Braemer on the day of his home-coming to be greeted by these two rosy-cheeked, flaming-haired midgets sitting on the doorstep in little, fringed buckskin shirts and extremely short kilts made from the last family remnants of the Mar tartan, and tiny beaver bonnets with a tanager's feather stuck jauntily in each. They had small, very bright, and rather frosty blue eyes, small, straight mouths that shut tight, with dimples on the side, square little chins which they thrust forward whenever they had anything definite to say—and they never said anything *in*definite—or whenever they suspected, as they frequently did, that some one was taking the liberty of poking fun at them. One was named Rob and the other Roy.

"What's your name?" a stranger would ask; and the twins would answer, both at once:

"Rob Roy." And the stranger would know little more than before he asked his question. Tuleko and Andy were among the favored few who could tell the twins apart. Roy was Tuleko's special chum and Rob was Andy's. They never quarreled with each other and seldom with Andy and Tuleko. But most other people had to look out for them! They seemed to feel that the rest of the world was out to do them wrong and they did not propose to let it. John Sevier, the most prominent man in Tennessee, who also lived on the Nolichucky and was the MacPhails' nearest neighbor, had nicknamed them "The Fighting MacPhails" when they were only three years old. But after Andy's return, when Sevier learned that Andy had been called "Silent Scot" on the Pennsylvania border, he changed their title to "The Scalping Scot," as if the two of them were but one; as indeed they were, one against the world.

To-day they were enjoying one of their chief pleasures in life, which was to ride on the backs of Ahyuni and Brandywine, when Tuleko and Andy took the horses to be shod. They emitted shrill shrieks of delight now as their faithful horse boys led them out of the hill grove onto a level, grassy space, and they saw the blacksmith's shop a few yards ahead with the small brook, where they would soon be dabbling their toes, flowing beside it.

"Plenty mans there," Tuleko said, pointing to *a*

huge wagon drawn by four horses, and half a dozen saddled horses near by in the shade of a clump of trees opposite the smithy.

"Ay," Andy answered, peering forward; "but 'tis only the Seviers. There's seventeen o' them, an' countin' Mrs. Sevier there's eighteen. An' that's plenty, as ye were sayin'. There's horses yonder by the brook, too; an' they look like La Roche's. That'll be twelve more, if all his laddies have come with him. An' there's Gustav Renz's bay mare with only Fritz's pony alongside; so I'm thinkin' he'll have left Johann an' Franz an' Otto an' Carl at home."

The smithy was a large, low, one-story log cabin, with a lean-to where the blacksmith slept. A great sign was nailed over the door, framed in rusty horseshoes. It was of planed wood with odd designs burned into it. In one corner there was an anchor, in another a flag with a skull and crossbones; along the bottom on uncertain waves floated something evidently meant for a ship in full sail. The center of the signboard bore the legend, in clumsy letters:

ADM'R'L TOM SHARK
Blacksmith and Tinsmith

The "Admiral" was one of John Sevier's jokes. He had carved the sign with his knife and Old One-Eye had burned over the lettering with a red-hot poker. That sign carved for him by Watauga's favorite hero was the old ex-pirate's proudest possession. Like nearly every other man on the Tennessee frontier Old One-Eye had given his whole-

hearted allegiance to "Nolichucky Jack." It was Sevier who had saved him from the wrath of the Wataugans when Andy made known how One-Eye had murdered Sevier's messenger, the man whose body Andy and Tuleko had found in the gully on the east side of the mountains.

Sevier had slashed the rope which some of the furious Wataugans had tied round Old Shark's neck. While deploring the death of his messenger, and as indignant about the wanton murder as any of them, Sevier had pointed out that One-Eye was an old man and not wholly sane. To hang him, he urged, would be a brutal act.

"In Watauga," he said, "we would rather let men live and prove that even though their hands are red they can still become good citizens."

And that was how Captain Shark, pirate, became the blacksmith of Watauga. Fate had taken a hand, too, in placing the old buccaneer in the mountains when the Revolution broke out. The reward offered for his capture was a British reward, since it had been advertised by a British governor before South Carolina entered the great civil war. With America rent between Patriots and Tories and the nearer seas a battling place for French and English fleets, no American could now sail or march Old Shark into Charleston and claim that reward. The Wataugans, of course, being so far from the coast city and its interests, had never even heard of Thomas Shark and the price upon his head. Something must be said for the Adm'r'l, too. He was

an old man to take up a new carreer successfully; and it was not every bloody pirate who had the ability to become a good blacksmith. Living with people had rid him of his ghosts and made him sane once more; and he appeared as happy and innocent as a boy.

"Ahoy, me lads!" The shout came like the blast of a foghorn from the dark depths of the smithy as Andy and Tuleko appeared at the door. Age and rheumatism had slowed the old pirate's limbs, but they had not weakened his mighty voice nor dimmed his one prominent red-brown eye.

"How are ye this mornin', Mr. Shark?" Andy asked, with his habitual courtesy.

"As fine and trim as the day I first sailed from Jamaica for the Spanish Main, and not above a year older than yourself. Hoho!" Shark replied heartily. "Quiet there, Matey," he said soothingly to the beautiful, nervous black horse he was shoeing.

"That'll be Nolichucky Jack's horse," Andy remarked, by way of making conversation while Tuleko took down the twins and tethered their horses.

"Ay. And he's here himself with his full crew. A good wind and a fair sail to Jack on every sea!"

At that moment Sevier came round from the brook to the door of the smithy with a man whom Andy did not know beside him, and several of his older sons in his wake. Sevier stood about five feet nine. He was a robust man with a broad chest, so his enemies, who could find little else to say

against him, called him "fat." He had a broad, high brow, a resolute jaw, a crisp crop of light-brown hair and deep blue eyes that sparkled with health, eagerness, and an unquenchable joy in life or in just being alive. He drew men to him as the proverbial magnet draws steel and held them like a galvanic battery. He met every peril with a jest, but did not delay taking the proper precautions to offset it. He had a powerful and subtle mind. He had been well educated by the Presbyterian pastors who were also the schoolmasters on the frontier. He could write diplomatic letters with a graceful flourish to appease the wrath of governors who never felt quite sure what this too popular hero was up to on his far side of the mountains. He was a wild rider and fighter. His fame as an Indian fighter was crystallized in the phrase "Thirty-five battles, thirty-five victories," which is carved now on his monument in Knoxville. He was a born leader whom men trusted and would follow anywhere. His mother was English and his father a descendant of French Huguenots of the distinguished family of Xavier, who had fled from religious persecution to England, where the name had been Englished into Sevier. There was an element of chivalry and gallantry and grace in John Sevier with his Indian dress and deerskin cap that would have well become his French cavalier ancestors in their satin suits and plumed hats. He mocked at the treacherous or jealous hate of his foes even while he conquered them or, as we might say, slangily to-day, "slid out

from under"—he had a way of not being there when the bomb was exploded! Perhaps the habitual twinkle in his blue eyes and the smiling set of his firm, rather full lips indicated his inner mirth that any man, red or white, should be vain enough to try conclusions with him. None ever did successfully.

"Andy MacPhail!" he exclaimed and gripped the boy's hand. "And the Runner." He shook hands as warmly with Tuleko. Then drawing back gravely, he made a low, sweeping bow, with his hat in his hand, to Roy Rob.

"Captain Lytle," he turned to the man beside him, "let me introduce you to Watauga's own Indian chief, Tuleko, Runner-on-the-Wind. It may be because Tuleko has run so fast that he's turning whiter. I don't know an honester white man. And this stalwart lad with last year's corn tassel on his head"—Andy grinned blushingly at this mention of his towy hair—"is Silent Scot MacPhail, the best scout in Watauga when I'm out of it."

When Captain Lytle, smiling, had shaken hands with the two boys, Sevier waved toward Rob Roy.

"And here let me present you to the two halves of one perfect whole, the Scalping Scot MacPhail." He laughed impudently at the twins whose little faces wore belligerent puckers. Rob Roy also adored Nolichucky Jack, but they never encouraged him to assail their dignity. More strongly even than Andy they had the Highlander's objection to being made sport of. They stood stockily side by side,

their feet rather wide apart, their chins thrust an inch farther forward than usual, and stared at Captain Lytle with warlike eyes as if daring him to take advantage of an introduction made in such an improper manner. However, they permitted him to shake hands with them.

"Dinna ye trifle wi' us, Jack!" said Rob sternly.

"Dinna trifle, Jack!" echoed Roy, as severely. Sevier roared, and clapped them on the shoulders so that they staggered.

Old La Roche came up from the brook with his eleven sons—the youngest was twelve years old—and the rest of the Sevier family also joined the group. Andy's welcoming smile dimmed as he caught sight of Jimmy Breed with the Seviers. Jimmy, a young man of about twenty-five, was a protégé of John Sevier, who had more useless hangers-on than Andy thought was good for him. He lived in a cabin on Sevier's land and was supposed to do odd jobs about the place. He was a poor woodsman and a poor shot, and Andy had no use for him. The boy sensed something not right and square behind the apparent good humor and frequent laughter of Jimmy Breed. He did not like Jimmy's little, pale, shifty eyes, nor his habit of asking personal questions. He was glad that Jimmy immediately took his gun, mounted his horse, and rode off.

"Jimmy has just made up his mind to go off for a few days on a hunt," Sevier remarked. Nobody thought any more about Jimmy Breed's sudden de-

parture then, nor connected it with Captain Lytle's arrival and the news he had brought from the Carolina towns on the east side of the mountains.

"You say he is marching north with a small force," Sevier said, evidently referring to a subject which he and Lytle had been discussing on their walk up from the brook to the smithy, "and you and Shelby plan to take him by surprise at Musgrove's Mill. It's worth trying. But you haven't the guns, eh?" Lytle nodded. Andy did not yet know what it was all about, but he came to the fore at once with his usual courtesy.

"Have ye got to fight a battle wi'out any guns, Captain Lytle? I'll be verra pleased to lend ye mine. I don't believe in fightin' battles wi'out guns. We never did that in Bunyan's Town." He wagged his head solemnly. Lytle suppressed a smile as he answered politely:

"Thank you kindly, Mr. MacPhail. By guns Jack here means armed men. I want fifty Wataugans to ride back with me. I want a hundred. I'll take twenty-five or a dozen if I can do no better."

"Here's twelve," said old La Roche, meaning himself and his eleven sons.

"I get you eight," said Fritz Renz. "Dot's my brudders und my cousins Hans und August und Franz Muller."

"Tuleko get two." The Indian boy's black eyes snapped as he pointed to Andy and then to himself. Andy nodded assent.

"Rob Roy get two," came in a sharp, piping voice

from near the ground behind La Roche and his eldest son, Jean, who were very tall men well over six feet. Sevier swung round to look down at the twins and laughed as he saw their little forefingers pointing at their chests in imitation of Tuleko. Rob Roy thought some new game was on, and of course they wanted to play, too.

"Not to-day, my little Scalping Scot," Sevier said, "but in another ten years I don't doubt you'll be in the thick of anything that's going on!" He turned again to Captain Lytle. "You've got twenty-two men already if Fritz is sure about his brothers and his cousins." Fritz was sure enough, but he reminded Sevier that it would take him some hours, perhaps until to-morrow, to round all of them up. Some of them, he said, were out hunting. Sevier thought that because of hunting parties and the scattered localities of the settlements it would probably be two or three days before fifty or a hundred men could be gathered together in Watauga to cross the mountains. "If Jimmy Breed hadn't gone off I'd put him on Blackfire and let him try to carry the call to all the settlements. The Indians are very restless just now because of that old devil, Dragging Canoe, and there's more than a risk that the messenger will never arrive, even on the fastest horse in the world."

"Breed! Pah!" Tuleko spat on the ground in contempt. He detested Jimmy Breed and did not care who knew it. "Breed no good Blackfire 'lone more good! Me t'ink better no horse. No

can hide horse from Injuns. Make too much noise. Thee send Runner-on-the-Wind. More quick. Tuleko run night time, too. Get all mans Watauga quick. To-morrow."

"That's the boy!" Sevier cried, clapping him on the shoulder. "Lytle, you'd better start with the men that are here. And the others will follow you probably the day after to-morrow."

"To-morrow," Tuleko interrupted. He spoke rapidly in Delaware to Andy; and then, with the briefest gesture of farewell to the group, he stooped slightly and leaped forward on the trail as if he went on wings.

"He runs like a hawk skimming a current of wind," said Lytle admiringly.

"Ye'll take Rob Roy home, Jack?" Andy asked. "An' One-Eye'll keep Tuleko's horse till he wants it to-morrow. I'll be ready to go wi' ye, Captain Lytle, as soon as Mr. Shark has shod Brandywine."

"You must know, Lytle," said Sevier, "that Andy was captured at the Brandywine and that explains the name of his horse. He escaped very cleverly, too. And, by the way, it must have been this very man you're going after who took him prisoner—Ferguson."

"What are ye sayin', Jack?" Andy cried excitedly. Silent Scot had understood that he was going with Lytle to join Colonel Isaac Shelby, who lived on the Holston River in Sullivan County; and that Shelby was organizing his men to attack some British commander, who was leading a small force of Back

Country Tories, at a place called Musgrove's Mill on the Enoree River in Carolina. He also grasped the fact that this attack was in a sense a flank movement by the frontiersmen timed to take place about when the major forces of the British under Cornwallis and the Americans under Horatio Gates would draw together probably at Camden almost directly east of the Mill. The blows were to be dealt as one, to smash Cornwallis and to rid the Back Country of the British guerrillas, who suborned white men of Tory sentiment, setting neighbor against neighbor on the frontier, and the robbers and roughs and other human driftwood who would do anything for a small hire. All this was clear enough to Andy without special explanations. But the news, so casually given him now, that the guerrilla officer he was going out to help Shelby defeat, slay, or capture was Ferguson, the mountain man, almost knocked the breath out of him.

"Yes, he must be the same man, Andy, from all accounts. And now is your chance to get even with him for tying you to a tree."

"Ay," Andy said slowly. He was still too excited for coherent thought; and he did not know how to answer. Only he felt that he had no grudge against Ferguson to avenge. Ferguson, the Aberdeen Highlander, was more nearly kin to him than any man he knew. And there was something more than that at the base of the strong feeling he had for him. It was as if Ferguson inhabited a white space of light in his heart. He was the embodiment of an

ideal and Andy treasured him with the silent, sacred rapture which is a part of the Highland temperament. Not even to his family nor to Sevier had he related the incident of Ferguson's refusing to shoot Washington in the back nor the scene at Ferguson's bedside when he had looked down on the wreckage of "the crack shot o' the world" who had said to him then that no man was "fit to be a soldier who would foul an honest gun with a cowardly shot." These were things for his own reverent contemplation, and not to be put on the lips of strangers, who did not know Ferguson, for loose bandying about. He thought that some day he might tell the story to Sevier, because he sensed something of the same "grand spirit" in Watauga's beloved Jack; but that day had not yet arrived.

"You'll have better than a fair revenge," said Lytle, his face darkening. "Ferguson is a skunk any boy should be glad of a chance to kill."

Andy shook his head solemnly. His thoughts were becoming more and more Scotch as he fought down his emotions.

"Nay, nay," he said, "Ferguson's nae skunk. He's a mon frae Aberdeen. An' there's nae skunks i' Aberdeen." Sevier laughed and remarked:

"Catch the echo of bubbling oatmeal porridge in our Andy's speech, Lytle! I think Ferguson is more of a wolf than a skunk from what you tell me of his terrible night raids. But skunk or wolf, our work is to get him."

An hour later Silent Scot was on his way with

Captain Lytle, the La Roche family, and the two Renzes.

On the east side of the mountains they went into camp to await Shelby and his men from the Holston and Tuleko with whatever Wataugans he might have been able to assemble. Captain Lytle had expected to find here some men from the vicinity of Gilbert Town, the present Lincolnton. His wife, who was famous throughout the Back Country of the Carolinas for both her remarkable beauty and her courage, and who was taking almost as active a part as himself in the Revolution, had undertaken to notify the Patriots of her district when and where to meet Lytle and Shelby. The nonarrival of these men threw him into a state of painful anxiety. Andy was finding the camp rather a bore and he suggested that he ride out in that direction in the effort to acquire some news of the lagging Patriots and of Mrs. Lytle. He had little difficulty in persuading Captain Lytle, whose fears for his wife's safety mounted by minutes.

Keeping behind the screen of the forest, Silent Scot rode in the general direction of Gilbert Town. The sky, clouded at dawn, now let down a gentle drizzle of rain. He could not see so far as if there had been sunlight; so he went more slowly and cautiously. He stopped short presently as he saw, in the open space before him, a group of men by a fire on the bank of a small brook. His vantage point commanded a view of the slightly higher ground, overgrown with pea vine, beyond them. And, in

the distance, he saw horsemen evidently coming from the southeast and bearing toward Gilbert Town. By the direction they were keeping he saw that they would presently espy the camp by the brook even if they had not already seen its smoke. The reasonable supposition was that these were two small bands of the men whom Mrs. Lytle had notified.

"They'll be joinin' one another an' goin' on down to Lytle's camp," he thought. "An' I'll best be goin' along wi' them."

Still—maybe not. These might be Tories. Silent Scot had the least desire in the world to walk into another nest of rascally Tories as he had done when he went innocently knocking at the Biddos' door. Tories were robbers. He tied Brandywine securely, hid his rifle, shot pouch, and powderhorn under a log, and with no other weapon than the hunting knife which he had brought all the way from Pennsylvania with him, he slipped out of the forest and crawled through the pea vines toward the camp. If these men were enemies he would put on his stupidest look and make them think he was a farmer's boy from some homestead near by. They would not suspect that a boy with only a knife on him had crossed the hills from Watauga. The misty drizzle and the slight wind, which came in little gusts, aided him in reaching the edge of the camp unobserved. He lay still behind some bushes within earshot of the men.

There were six of them clustered about the fire. At the edge of the creek lay a woman tied to a

stump. Her ankles were drawn up and bound to her hands behind her back in a way that, Andy knew, must be causing her intense suffering. Remembering Captain Lytle's anxiety about his wife, Andy did not doubt that the woman was Mrs. Lytle. As to the men, he had recognized them at once, despite their Indian feathers and war paint. They were that detestable and ruffianly Biddo family. He gulped with rage.

"Here's a nice kettle o' fish for ye to fry, Andy MacPhail," he muttered. Back on the hillside, under a log, lay the beautiful army rifle which he had surreptitiously borrowed from Dred Biddo a year or more ago. No, he could expect scant courtesy from the Biddos, if they remembered him as they probably would. It seemed impossible for him to rescue Mrs. Lytle; but, to Andy, it was quite as impossible to leave her to her fate, especially when he did not know whether the men he had seen riding toward the camp were more wicked Tories or frontier Patriots. He lay quiet, watching, listening and thinking hard.

"So you won't talk, eh?" he heard old Pa Biddo say to the woman. "Dred, you stick your ramrod in the fire till it's red hot. You'll talk or you'll yell, then, Mistress Lytle. Take your choice." Dred, with a horrid grin, stuck his ramrod in the blaze.

"Pity Ma ain't here," he said. "She'd take to this like a duck to water, Ma would." His brother, Jeff, piled more wood on the fire. The wood was

wet and it nearly put the fire out, which made Dred so angry that he started a violent row with Jeff, forgetting all about heating the ramrod. In a few moments the row had become a family brawl, with all the Biddos in it, pounding and kicking at one another. Andy was just on the point of rushing in, seizing a gun, and taking a fighting chance against them, when he saw the horsemen dashing up through the little creek. Their leader, aiming high, fired; and the crack of the shot over their heads gave the Biddos such a scare that they stopped fighting.

"Halt there, and hands up!" came the order. The Biddos hastily obeyed. The six of them stood side by side, their knees shaking and their hands held up above their heads.

The main group of riders came up now. They separated. The man who had fired saluted and said something to a smaller man behind him. This man, who was wrapped in a checkered cloak, mounted on a fine white horse, and held a sword in his left hand, spurred forward. Andy's heart leaped. It was Ferguson.

"This is Jim Biddo; and the boys are his sons. And they're all good Tories, Major," said another man. "Who is the woman, Jim?" he added.

"Woman?" Ferguson exclaimed. Then swinging round he saw her. "What's the meaning of this?" he demanded. "You white men in Indian feathers and this woman bound hand and foot! Release her, Jackson. You, Biddo, answer me!"

But the Biddos, still shaking with cowardly fright, seemed to be tongue-tied. In silence they watched Jackson cut Mrs. Lytle's bonds. Andy felt that his moment had come. He sprang from behind the willows and ran toward Ferguson.

"Oh, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Ferguson!" he cried. "Oh, but I'm glad to see ye again, Mr. Ferguson!" He stood at Ferguson's stirrup, looking up at him with his most innocent, beaming smile.

"Andy MacPhail!"

"Ay. 'Tis me an' no mistake. I'm terrible flattered ye remember me, Mr. Ferguson. Wi' all the lads ye've seen in America, comin' an' goin', I wouldn't have expected ye to know Andy's face again. Ay, 'tis terrible flatterin', Mr. Ferguson."

Ferguson's hard lip twitched and there was momentarily a somewhat softer gleam in his smoldering black eyes.

"You young rogue, you disobeyed orders. You must have made off from the farm like a breeze through the air that night, for I couldn't find a man nor a hen that saw you go."

Andy blinked twice. "Oh, ay," he answered casually. "Ye forgot, no doubt, I told ye I had to go to Carolina. Ye see, my father was expectin' me. An' what wi' battles an' cookin' an' tents to be put up an' tents to be took down, and all, there was work enough for every man at the Brandywine wi'out the bother o' watchin' me to see that nothin' hurtit me. So I said to mysel', 'Andy MacPhail, ye're nothin' but a grand nuisance to Mr. Ferguson

stayin' here. Andy,' I said, 'ye get along now to Carolina.' So I borrowed my knife from the kind gentlemen ye put to guard me; an' I came to Carolina."

"So I see, Andy; so I see." Ferguson's lip twitched again. "Well, my lad, since I find you among Tories I know you're no rebel. But what can you tell me about all this?"

"Ay, ay," solemnly. " 'Tis a shameful sight, as ye say, Mr. Ferguson. An' didn't I tell these worthless Biddos that 'twas no way to treat a beautiful lady. But they wouldn't listen to me, Mr. Ferguson. They've insulted her an' mistreated her, an' if ye hadn't come by, Mr. Ferguson, they were makin' ready to burn her wi' a red-hot ramrod."

"What!" Ferguson cried.

"Oh, ay. 'Twas that red-headed villain, Dred Biddo, was heatin' the ramrod."

"It's a lie!" one Biddo shouted, seeing the white rage that went over Ferguson's face and how his sword hand swung up. "A lie," another echoed. "He stole my rifle," Dred shouted.

"Silence, ye villain!" Andy roared at Dred particularly. "Don't ye dare answer back to Mr. Ferguson! Stole your gun, indeed, ye scoundrel! That's a fine thing for ye to say to a gentleman like Mr. Ferguson. Hold yer tongue!"

"If what Andy says is true," Ferguson said hoarsely, "I'll hang the six of you before I leave this spot. Place a guard over them, Jackson."

He dismounted and bowed low before Mrs. Lytle,

his look kindling at the beauty of her face and the proud flashing eyes, which not even her recent experience could dim.

"Madam, I am Major Ferguson, wholly at your service. May I know whom I have the honor of addressing?"

"I am Mrs. Lytle, sir, the wife of Captain Robert Lytle of the Revolutionary Army."

"I know your husband by name, madam, as a brave and a gallant gentleman. I only deplore that he fights on the wrong side."

Mrs. Lytle's handsome head lifted more proudly, and a gleam like steel came from her brilliant eyes.

"He fights on the side of liberty, sir; and side by side with honest, brave, and free men, not villains like these Tories who heap indignities on helpless women."

"Madam," said Ferguson gallantly, "I esteem you as the handsomest woman I have seen in the Carolinas. I even halfway esteem your ardor in a bad cause. The Revolution has failed, and is virtually put down. Yesterday, Lord Cornwallis defeated the Southern Army at Camden; and your general, Gates, has fled. I regret that news so glorious sends the color from your cheek; for I have only friendly feelings in telling it to you. I beg of you, send to Captain Lytle and request him to come in. He will not be asked to take the oath nor to surrender his sword. His bare word that he will not again take up arms against the King will be sufficient for me."

"I will consider it, sir," she answered, with trembling lips. Andy had hung his head at hearing the tragic news that the main army of the Patriots in the South was in flight, lest Ferguson should glance at him and read in his face, too, how great a blow he had delivered. He thought of Lytle and Shelby probably now riding toward Musgrove's Mill unaware that Gates had failed and that the victorious Cornwallis was pressing on. Their own campaign had now become dangerous in the extreme.

"Your word, madam; is it true what Andy relates of these men?"

"It is true," she replied.

"Which is your horse, madam?"

She indicated it, and a soldier led it up. Ferguson sheathed his sword and offered his left hand to help her to mount.

"Your right arm is wounded, sir?" she asked kindly. "Ah, it pains you," she added as she saw his face contract.

"Not in the way you imagine, madam. It is an old wound. And it does not heal."

"It's the wound in his heart he means," Andy thought. "Him that was the crack shot o' the world." The tears came into his eyes.

"I cannot spare an escort for you," Ferguson said. "For every King's man has work to do. But this is your own country and you are a woman of courage. You had better depart, for the hanging of even such ruffians as these is not a sight for a woman's eyes."

An expression of pity that yet was somewhat tinged with contempt came into her fine eyes.

"I request you not to do that, sir. Indeed, you may safely leave it to our own frontiersmen to deal with them."

"Major, will you not heed this lady?" said another officer. "After all, we're out to kill rebels, not Tories. Why hang six fighting men of our own side?"

"You think so, De Peyster? For my part, from what I've seen of the rabble sporting the King's uniform in the Back Country, I'd gladly begin with them and wipe out every redskin and every hill robber who serves a great cause so ill for hire! They are a disgrace to the flag they follow. But have your way. Put these Biddoes in front. Put six men behind to watch them. We'll see if there is any fighting courage in such yellow dogs. At the first sign of cowardice before the enemy let the men behind them shoot them in the back."

"Mr. Ferguson," Andy piped up innocently. "Wouldn't ye feel safer for the lady sendin' me along a bit wi' her? I can run beside the horse. An' she lives not so far from where I'm workin'."

Ferguson laid his hand on Andy's shoulder.

"Now that's a good idea, Andy. For, once again, I was wondering what in the world I was going to do with you!"

"Oh, ay. It does seem like I'm always droppin' in on ye when ye're busy, Mr. Ferguson. I've an awfu' habit o' that!"

Ferguson leaped on the white horse, raised his hat formally to Mrs. Lytle, and, with a curt order, dashed off down the creek, followed by his men. Andy quickly explained his situation to Mrs. Lytle; and then crimsoned like a ripening beetroot when she kissed him enthusiastically for "the smartest lad in the Carolinas." It comforted him in his embarrassment, however, to know that she had got word to most of Lytle's men before the Biddos captured her.

"We should meet them on the way," she said, as Andy, mounted again on Brandywine, swung into the trail beside her. "And then you can join them. I am safe enough now."

They had not ridden more than a mile, when the sound of rushing hoofs beat on their ears. Fifty men in fringed buckskin, with rifles, hove in sight. Their leader reined in for a word of explanation from Mrs. Lytle; then, calling "Come on" to Andy, he led on again at full speed. Mrs. Lytle tore the colored kerchief from her throat and, standing in her stirrups, waved it like a flag at the men dashing by her.

At the rendezvous they found a note saying that Shelby and Tuleko had arrived and that they had started for Musgrove's Mill three hundred strong. Andy with Lytle's fifty men spurred after them.

"Three hundred and fifty isn't many to tackle Ferguson. He'll have maybe double with him," remarked one man.

"Three hundred and fifty-one. An' sometimes

one man's better than a score," corrected Andy, who was feeling rather proud of himself.

The sky cleared toward night. There was a bit of moon to help them on their way. In the deeper darkness just before dawn they first heard the fusillade of rifles.

"That wolf, Ferguson!" a man exclaimed, with an oath. "He's run down on them in the night. That's the wolf for you! Coming down on the sheep pen in the dark. A wolf's trick. Even Indians wait for daylight." As they proceeded cautiously now toward the place from which the shots sounded louder and louder, this man told tales to Andy of Ferguson as a night marauder that sent chills through his scalp. He said Ferguson would dash down on a Patriot settlement in the night and put to the sword every man who refused to take the oath of loyalty to the King. He took and he gave no quarter. His face was terrible at such times, the man went on to say; white as chalk with black burning eyes like a demon's. Men were less afraid of six British soldiers with rifles than of this one left-handed swordsman, the mad border wolf. Now they heard another sound, the blood-chilling war whoop which the frontiersmen had adopted from the Indians. They veered that way and presently rode right in among the Wataugans. Andy's first view of Tuleko showed him the Runner with his head up, giving vent to the red warrior's favorite yodel with all the joy of his fierce Delaware blood.

Shelby had decided to hold their position, though

they were largely outnumbered. But when he learned from Andy that the Southern Army under Gates had been put to flight, he knew his own case was hopeless. The plan, then, was to fight a rear-guard action, holding Ferguson back while they made for the hills.

"It's over the mountains for us, boys," Shelby said. "But when we come back we'll bring hunters enough to trap this wolf!"

Dawn broke on them speeding for the hills with Ferguson in hot pursuit. Andy, looking over his shoulder, saw Tuleko in danger and scorning his own risk, rode back, shot the man who was aiming at Tuleko, and then wheeled again at a gallop for the hills. But, in saving his friend, he had missed his own chance to escape. In a moment he was surrounded and taken prisoner. Presently for the second time in twenty-four hours he stood face to face with Ferguson.

"What are you doing here, Andrew MacPhail?" the mountain man demanded sternly.

"That's what I'm wonderin', mysel', Mr. Ferguson," Andy said ruefully. "Ye'd better have taken me along wi' ye, 'stead o' the Biddos. For I'd no sooner left the lady than a company of wild, yellin' men came by an' took me along an' started me onto fightin'."

"So that's how it happened, eh?"

"Oh, ay, in a manner o' speakin'. I may be too excited an' scairt to be able to tell ye the right o' it. An', by the way, Mr. Ferguson, how are the

Biddos makin' out as sojers—especially Dred Biddo, the red-headed one?"

"The Biddos are among the dead, and only one of them has an *American* bullet in him," was Ferguson's grim response. Then he said, "Andy, do you know a man who could cross those mountains? I want to send a letter to Shelby and Sevier and some of those others who got away from me to-day."

Andy scratched his head thoughtfully.

"I'm thinkin' I know a man up yonder that's been acrost; an' I'm sure he'd be verra proud to carry a letter for ye, Mr. Ferguson. I'll take it to him for ye, an' be glad, to oblige ye."

"You'll do me a real service, Andy." Ferguson scrawled a short note rather awkwardly with his left hand. It read:

"To Isaac Shelby, John Sevier, and all Overmountain Men, Gentlemen: If you do not lay down your arms and swear allegiance to the King I will cross your mountains with my army and hang your leaders to the highest trees in Watauga. I am a mountain man myself and I am not afraid to cross hills. Yours respectfully,

"Patrick Ferguson."

"You think the man you know will be able to find these rebels?" Ferguson asked.

"Oh, ay." Andy wished he could tell Ferguson that he meant to take the letter himself. But, no; it wouldn't do. He hoped Ferguson would be on the right side in this war before long; and then they

could laugh together over the way Andy had fooled him.

"You're tired and need food and a sleep before you start, lad," Ferguson said. "My orderly will bring us breakfast soon; and, after it, you'll take a nap in my tent with me." One of the things Andy liked to remember all the years of his life was how Ferguson, gently as his mother might, had wrapped him in his own tartan as he drowsed off. A couple of hours later, astride of Brandywine, with the Wolf's challenge in his pouch, Silent Scot was galloping along the mountain trail. Just within the pass he met Tuleko, who had missed him and was coming back to search for him. The two friends clasped each other in one of their strangling bear hugs. Then, loosing hold, they rode together homeward.

CHAPTER IV

NOLICHUCKY JACK'S BARBECUE

THERE had never been such a party in Watauga; no, nor in Pennsylvania. Silent Scot and Runner-on-the-Wind were agreed on that point. In fact they went further. They assured each other that there had never been such a party anywhere in the world as the monster barbecue and horse race which John Sevier was giving on the banks of the Nolichucky River on this golden, young September day.

The best party Andy could remember was one Thanksgiving in Bunyan's Town on the Pennsylvania border when settlers and friendly Indians from outlying points had gathered there to make a gorgeous feast of wild turkeys and to play games and sing songs and test their marksmanship. He had beaten all the other boys in jumping, wrestling, and shooting, and a visiting stranger named George Washington had praised him and given him a coin.

"Oh, yes, that was a grand party, but Nolichucky Jack's is better," he told Tuleko.

Nodding solemnly, Tuleko also became reminiscent. He said that when he was a very little boy his people, the Delawares, fought a great battle with the Shawanoes. They came home with plenty

of scalps and they made a feast and danced and whooped for three days and nights, and, incidentally, ate up more than a month's supply of food. There were over twenty enemy scalps hanging from the war pole, he said; and the way they fluttered in the wind was a beautiful sight. Andy did not care much for scalps, himself. He had a white man's feeling about them; but he nodded politely. Tuleko went on to say that Jack's barbecue was better even than that feast of victory. However, he wished he could see just one scalp dangling from the painted war pole down there in the meadow round which some of the younger frontiersmen were dancing an Indian war dance.

"Ye would? Whose scalp would ye like to see there, Tuleko?" Andy asked, with interest.

"Breed scalp," the Runner replied, and spat on the ground. He never mentioned the name of Jimmy Breed, the young white man who lived on John Sevier's charity, without spitting to show his contempt for him.

"Well," said Sandy, "if there was any lawful way for ye to get it I wouldn't stop ye." Silent Scot's estimate of Jimmy Breed was about the same as Tuleko's.

The two scouts were sitting on a fallen tree in the shade of a huge sycamore which occasionally dropped a yellow or brown leaf down on them. They could see the dashing little Nolichucky River sparkling under the flooding sunshine, and the richly scented smoke of the barbecue fires ascending from

the nearer shore. Fat deer, young bears, turkeys, and pigeons were being roasted in pits and from spits. Laughingly, Tuleko pointed at a fire off to the right of them. The cook there was poking a couple of turkeys about with a heavy stick, so that they might brown evenly all over, and darting a kettle in and out under them in the effort to catch their gravy. His hat lay on the ground and his little ratty queue of hair stuck out like a stag beetle's horn. He circled the spit slowly on his rheumatic limbs, poking the fowls, and apparently unaware that his scarred and wicked old face wore a wide and curiously childlike smile of happiness. It was Admiral Tom Shark, Old One-Eye, the ex-pirate, once the bloody terror of the Spanish Main and now the village blacksmith of Watauga. Since his first sight of him on the night when he had helped Andy capture him in his dugout in the mountains, Tuleko had found Old One-Eye irresistibly comic. He laughed whenever Tom Shark was mentioned. He laughed whenever he looked at him.

"Him funny man," he said, with a grunt.

"Oh, ay," Andy agreed. His thoughts reverted to that night in the dugout, and he wondered why Old Shark had never gone back there to get the sack of gold buried in the earth floor. To be sure, it would be a hard trip for him now that his rheumatism was worse. And perhaps he was afraid that he would meet again some of the ghosts he used to see up there in the lonely nights. Still, he might have sent some one else. He had spoken of that

sack of gold only to-day; yes, and last week, too, when John Sevier and Jimmy Breed and Andy and Tuleko were in the blacksmith shop. Sevier had said he didn't believe that there was any sack of gold. And Jimmy Breed had echoed Sevier, as he usually did, and added that no man would leave gold behind him. Then Shark had appealed to Andy for confirmation of his tale. Well, Andy had admitted, there was a bag of heavy yellow pieces, but whether it were really gold or not he couldn't say. He didn't like the way Jimmy Breed looked at him then, nor the way he had tried to pump him later about the pass that led to the dugout and through the mountains. He wouldn't put stealing beyond Jimmy Breed any day in the week.

Jimmy was all attention to the guests to-day, running hither and yon, carrying platters of roasted meat and corn. But even his errand did not make him more tolerable to Andy and Tuleko. Perhaps that was because they had already eaten all they could for the time being. They would ply vigorous jackknives and molars again an hour or so hence; but just now they were content to sit lazily on their log in the shade and look on at the feasting, the racing, and the dancing. They had already established their supremacy in the games and races. Tuleko, in the mile running race for men, had simply walked away from all his competitors. He and Andy had tied in the jumping contest. Andy had outshot every other man in the long shot contest; and then, just to show them how easy it had been for him, he had

moved the target twenty yards further off and sent his ball through its center. But of course he had not let anybody imagine that he thought he had done anything much by that. Oh, dear, no.

"A great shot! A fine shot! Hurrah for Silent Scot!" That was how they all yelled at him. He knew exactly how to answer them.

"Oh, ay. I'm learnin'," said he, very carelessly.

Then, too, his horse, Brandywine, had won one race. So had Tuleko's vicious little Cherokee pony, Ahyuni. Tuleko was bragging about that now.

"Ahyuni ver' smart," the Runner grunted. "Me tell thee how Fritz him ride big bay mare. Mare she ver' fast, ver' strong. Mare she run ahead, leave Ahyuni behin'. She think beat Ahyuni. No! Ahyuni jump. Ahyuni stoop. Ahyuni bite mare in leg. Mare kick, run off road in bush. Ahyuni go ahead. Ahyuni win. Ver' smart."

"Oh, ay, Ahyuni's smart all right," said Andy.

"Jack say Ahyuni not race no more to-day. He say no horse can beat horse smart like Ahyuni," Tuledo concluded contentedly.

Andy mused that it would only spoil Tuleko's pleasure to explain to him that Ahyuni was considered disqualified to race with well-behaved horses. And anyway Tuleko could never be made to understand why smartness like Ahyuni's was held to be foul in sports. "Fair play" was a white man's ethics. Tuleko was an Indian.

A large man with a square jaw and red hair came up to them and paused for a chat. He was Duncan

MacPhail, Andy's father. The twins, Rob and Roy MacPhail, hung to each of his hands.

"I had to fetch Rob Roy awa' from the food for fear they'd eat themselves to death," he said. "They got at one o' Old Tom's turkeys an' were all for pickin' it clear to the bone. One-Eye's been tellin' them grand tales o' the sea an' Jolly Roger an' his pirate crew. 'Twas won'erful thrillin' to hear him tell how he's buried gold in the beach sands o' the West Indian isles by the light o' the full moon." He smiled bashfully as he admitted that he had enjoyed Old Shark's stories as much as the twins. He dropped down on the log beside Andy.

Rob Roy lay flat on the grass on their backs with their aggressive little noses and their stuffed and arching tummies lifted toward the sky.

"Oh, ay," said Andy, looking them over critically, especially where they bulged, "Rob Roy's got awfu' fat since mornin'."

"Well, it's a grand picnic," his father admitted. "An' a great crowd. There's many new faces in Watauga this autumn. What with the war over the hills an' the Tories an' the British harassin' the settlers there, an' the game gettin' scarcer an' hunters gettin' few pelts to sell, it's all started them comin' across the mountains to Watauga. An' the land here bein' so good an' so cheap an' no end to it. When the Gov'nor o' North Carolina made me entry taker for this section I never dreamed there'd be so many men come in to buy land from me. Ye wouldn't believe how much money is locked up in

the land office this verra day. Enough to buy rifles an' powder for every man at the barbecue."

Tuleko was not listening because he could not understand. His sharp eyes had been roving over the meadows and the trail, and they had seen such dust as horses make when ridden madly.

"Look! Look!" he cried, jumping up and pointing.

Three horsemen dashed at a racing gallop up to the steps of Sevier's house, where Sevier was standing with a crowd about him. There was usually a crowd round Nolichucky Jack.

"That's Isaac Shelby!" Andy exclaimed, recognizing Shelby's horse. "Ay, an' that's McDowell, too! Who'll yon man be that's wi' them?"

"We'll go an' join them," his father said. "That'll be the quickest way to find out. There's big matters in the wind that brings Shelby an' McDowell to Jack's door so swift."

Duncan, Andy, and Tuleko started briskly down the slope; but the twins preferred to lie still on their backs until they had digested their dinners. There was no danger that they would stray off into the woods and get lost. The Indian terror trained frontier children to stay within sight of the family cabin. Besides, to-day several hundred men and their families were roaming Sevier's broad acres.

Neither their father nor their brother now making off for Sevier's house had the least suspicion that Rob Roy would have an adventure; but that is precisely what the twins presently proceeded to do.

This is not the place to tell the adventure which turned out in the end to have been quite important. It is enough to say that it began in their efforts to catch a bushy-tailed, rather fearless little animal which scampered ahead of them and disappeared through the open door of Jimmy Breed's cabin. Rob Roy went in after it. They may have known that it was a skunk; and then again, they may not. The chances are that they did know, and went after it anyway just to show it that it could not intimidate them. That would be just like Rob Roy. The Scalping Scot would call any one's bluff any time—man's, skunk's, or horned toad's.

Andy's heart beat excitedly as he neared the house. This news, he felt sure, would have something to do with Ferguson. Perhaps Ferguson had crossed the mountains to join the Americans. Andy could never understand why so fine a man as Patrick Ferguson continued to fight on the British side, which was so clearly the wrong side. He was always expecting to hear that Ferguson had come over to the Patriots' cause. He had not heard anything of the mountain man nor had he seen Shelby since the skirmish at Musgrove's Mill a fortnight ago. On his way home he had come up with Shelby's men in the hill pass and given Shelby Ferguson's letter of challenge, then ridden on to Watauga with Tuleko; and, after a day's rest, he and the Runner had gone out on a long hunt. In fact they had returned only last week, just in time to help Jack get ready for the barbecue. He reassured himself

now—so great was his desire—that Shelby and McDowell had come to announce the mountain man's defection from the British cause. Perhaps the third man was Ferguson—— He raced ahead of his father and Tuleko.

But the stranger was not Ferguson. He was Colonel William Campbell of Washington County, Virginia. Sevier introduced him several times as the group before the steps enlarged. Jack's guests were running up from every direction to learn what was in the wind. Even Old One-Eye came along at a limping trot, leaving his turkeys to their fate.

"Boys," Sevier was saying, "we are called on to make a quick decision. The British are masters in North Carolina. Cornwallis is at Charlotte and Ferguson has made his headquarters at Camden. They have driven themselves in like a wedge between Washington's army to the north and our Southern Army. We must force them out, or we must say good-by to our liberties and our homes."

"We'll never do *that!*" a man shouted. Several of the younger men on the outskirts of the crowd started up the Indian war song, padding their moccasined feet to its blood-chilling rhythm. After a moment or two of this, Sevier, with a flashing smile, held up his hand for silence.

"That's the spirit, boys! Ferguson has sent us orders to throw down our weapons and take the oath of allegiance to King George——"

"Who's he?" some one yelled, and a laugh went round.

"Hush! Listen to Jack," another voice put in.

"If we refuse to obey, Ferguson threatens to come over and hang the four of us here—Shelby, McDowell, Campbell, and myself. And then he'll fire your homes."

"Let him come!"

"We'll show him a thing or two about hanging!"

"Trap the Wolf!"

"Skin him alive!"

For a few minutes there was a wild hubbub of imprecations on Ferguson, mingled with the deadly croon of the war song.

"Colonel Campbell also says 'Let him come'!" Sevier went on as soon as he could be heard. "His advice is to get ready and wait for him. He says Ferguson will be at a great disadvantage once he has put the mountains between himself and Cornwallis. That is true. But I think we daren't wait. And Colonel Shelby and Colonel McDowell agree with me. Ferguson wouldn't come till he had killed or captured every loyal American in the Back Country of the Carolinas and Virginia and burned every Patriot homestead. We can't let him do that. No, boys, the Wolf has run wild too long. This is the time to hunt him down."

The crowd sent up fierce shouts of approval; and presently the slow and stentorian voice of old Gustav Renz was heard asking:

"Ven—do—ve—stardt?"

"As soon as we've got an army!" Sevier shouted back.

"Ain't we an army?" some one wanted to know.

"We are!" came the chorused reply; and the war chant started up again. Sevier motioned for silence.

"Boys, this is a little different from dashing out to repel an Indian raid on our own ground. We are going against a brilliant officer and disciplined troops. We need not less than eighteen hundred men. We must be fully equipped and well drilled. And there's another thing. The Governor of North Carolina is the head of the military forces of this state. We will have to get his permission to raise an army and request him to send us a commanding officer. And also, boys, we have to get the money from him for our equipment."

"Jehoshaphat!" exclaimed Constable John Burke. "We might as well give up the notion right now. The Governor is timid as a rabbit an' slower'n treacle. An' tryin' to git money out'n him is like milkin' a hickory tree. 'Tain't done. He never did have no likin' for us Overmountain men, anyhow."

"Ay," said Duncan MacPhail, "before ye'll git the pennies from him for raisin' an army, Ferguson will have ceased ravagin' the border, for he'll have got too old to go on wi' it."

"Money, is it? Pennies, eh?" Old One-Eye's voice was like a husky foghorn. His one prominent red-brown eye flamed like a wood spark. He thrust men right and left as he forced his way to the steps. "Harkee, Jack, my pretty lad. You shall have Old Shark's gold, so you shall. What! My pretty Jack

wantin' money an' puttin' his neck in the noose by goin' to gov'nors for it? Never, while Old Shark has his sack of gold!"

"What's that, Admiral?" Sevier, laughing, put his hand on the old pirate's shoulder. "Do you still swear there's real gold in that dugout? What about that, Andy?"

"I never saw much gold, Jack," Silent Scot answered slowly, "but that bag was awfu' heavy. An' it looked like gold. An' Tom was in a terrible way because I left it behind. I'm thinkin', Jack, that it's real gold."

"Bless the lad!" cried Old Shark. "Real gold it is, I promise you! Enough to have made me a gentleman in Jamaica all my days—an' a gov'nor, too, I don't doubt. You send Andy an' Tuleko back after the gold, Jack. They know the way."

"Aw! He's crazy, Mr. Sevier. There ain't no gold!" It was Jimmy Breed speaking.

"There's somethin' that looks like gold," Andy insisted. "I've seen it."

"Well, if it was there then, that's a long time ago. An' you can bet somebody's found it an' taken it off. You can sure bet on that!" Jimmy Breed scowled at Andy. "You'll waste time goin' lookin' for it. An' there's Injuns all round in the mountains an' you'd get scalped, too."

"Harkee, Breed, you get off deck an' back to the scullery or I'll walk you off the plank!" Old Shark roared at him. "You mind me, my pretty

Jack. The gold's true gold an' will buy you the prettiest army that ever marched. You send Andy for my gold, Jack. An' don't you be askin' the Gov'nor. Keep away from gov'nors, pretty Jack. I could tell you a tale of the troubles I've had with gov'nors! Pests they are—interferin' with lawful trade upon the seas. A gov'nor give you money? A noose of rope round my neck is all they ever tried to give brave Captain Shark. Keep away from gov'nors, my pretty Jack!"

"Three cheers for Old One-Eye," somebody shouted. The cheers were given with gusto, while Old Shark grinned from ear to ear. Only Jimmy Breed stood silent, scowling.

"I believe the Admiral," Shelby said, "and I am in favor of sending Andy and Tuleko to the dugout. If we can get the money without asking the state for it, we can move faster."

"I agree with that," said McDowell. "I live nearer to the Governor than you boys, and I'd rather go ahead without consulting him at all. It's true that he is the military head of the state. Legally speaking we ought to have his sanction and he should provide a commander for our army. But my opinion is that if we consult him we'll get nothing done. He'll be glad enough if we capture Ferguson. If we fail he can't do any worse than put some of us in jail. He can't keep us there."

"You bet!" somebody yelled. "We'll pull his jail down!"

"Pull his jail down!" the crowd chorused.

"General Gates might send us an officer. He is in hiding with some of his staff at Lytle's place," Campbell suggested.

"Yes," Sevier agreed. "And Andy and Tuleko could go on to Lytle's with a letter for Gates."

At this another hubbub broke out. Sevier's Wataugans didn't want any commander but their own Jack. They were sure that Shelby's Holston men felt the same way about Isaac; and Campbell's Virginians and McDowell's Carolinians, too, if they were loyal men. And what about those first-rate Back Country soldiers, Cleveland and Hampbright and Chronicle and Williams who would be sure to join them with all their own troops east of the Appalachians? Here were officers enough for any army and officers whom frontiersmen knew and trusted, officers with a record of victories in Indian warfare.

"All ve know about Gates," said old Renz, "is dot he losdt der baddle at Camden."

Campbell tried to say something about the need for regular army drill and discipline, but was cut short by another storm of protests. The way to fight, he was told, was to look to your rifle, have your ammunition handy, and your horse fresh, then swing a leg over the saddle and ride into it. Regular army officers gave themselves too many airs, with their colored uniforms, cocked hats, shiny buttons, and clean boots. Ferguson would come down on them and wipe them out while the officer was polishing his buttons.

"He'll want us to put on lace frills an' powder our hair," cried one.

"He'll make us wear tight boots!" another yelled.

"Jehoshaphat!" Burke exclaimed, "we're goin' to *war*. We ain't goin' courtin' a gal!"

But on the subject of a commanding officer, a real general for their army, the four leaders remained firm. Although they did not say so, they realized that if any local colonel of militia were promoted to that post, jealousies would spring up among the followers of the others. It was decided that Sevier should write the letter to General Horatio Gates. Mrs. Sevier brought him pen, ink, and paper from indoors and Sevier sat down on the step to compose the letter. It was no easy matter amid the rain of suggestions that pelted down on him. Every man had his own idea of what Gates should be told to consider first in selecting their commander. He must be instructed not to send one of these "girlish, pretty fellows always lookin' in the mirror an' thinkin' about his clothes." Nor any "fussy old woman, neither." And if he unloaded on them one of those stuck-up top-lofty fellows, who "barked orders at you like you was a dog" and expected them to treat him "like he was better'n you was," why, they would just "snip off his buttons an' load their rifles with 'em an' shoot 'em into him, by gosh!"

> "He died, the handsome young officer died,
> From twenty brassy buttons in his hide,"

Somebody chanted, and this impromptu lyric went

round like a college glee. Every now and then some one contributed a new line.

> "Tell my pop and momma how I up an' died,
> Coz my boots was dusty an' it hurt my pride.
> Oh, twenty brassy buttons in my hide."

"Listen to them, the Indians!" McDowell grinned.

"It might be better to give General Gates a hint to the effect that our men are opposed to—er—to——" Shelby seemed not to know exactly how to finish his sentence.

Sevier wrote on busily, while the song swelled from two hundred throats.

"How is this?" he asked. He handed the letter to Shelby.

"It's very good," Shelby said heartily.

"Read it aloud," said Sevier, "and let's hear what *they* think of it."

It took over five minutes to stop the music. The crowd then listened with critical attention while Shelby read the historic document which runs, in part, thus:

"As we have at this time called out our militia without any orders from the executive of our different states and with the view of expelling the enemy out of this part of the country, we think such a body of men worthy of your attention and would request you to send a general officer immediately to take the command. All our troops being militia and but little acquainted with discipline, we could wish

him to be a gentleman of address, and able to keep up a proper discipline without disgusting the soldiery."

"A fery goodt ledder," said Renz. "Now he knows vot ve expecdt."

"Ay, that's fine about him not disgustin' the soldiery." Duncan MacPhail repeated the phrase appreciatively.

The crowd admitted reluctantly that it was a good letter. If, after a plain warning like that, the officer did "disgust the soldiery," the consequences would lie squarely on his own head. They were not in favor of him, but they would tolerate him provided he behaved himself.

Decisions did not wait long for execution on the frontier. Within half an hour Andy and Tuleko were on their way to recover Old One-Eye's gold and to deliver the letter. Sevier told Jimmy Breed to accompany McDowell and to visit other local commanders east of the mountains and bring back word of the approximate forces they could raise. The Overmountain men would muster at Sycamore Shoals on the twenty-sixth.

Jimmy Breed had his own reasons for not wanting to go with McDowell, but he dared not show his unwillingness. He went toward his cabin to get his rifle. In a few moments he came dashing back, his face purple with rage, screaming curses. He spluttered so that no one could understand what he said. There was a general rush in the direction

of his cabin to find out what was the matter. But the rush stopped well short of the door.

"Skunk!" they yelled and grabbed their noses.

Here we insert another brief installment of the serial adventures of Rob Roy MacPhail.

The Scalping Scot stood just inside the door, with their new pet firmly grasped between them. One held it by the tail, the other by the back of its neck. To a medley of frantic commands, the twins replied in effect that they would not throw the skunk out so that some one could shoot it. They asserted that it was theirs, they had caught it with no small effort and difficulty, they liked it, and they would keep it. From their determined attitude it was plain that the stench which so offended other nostrils was to theirs only the sweet odor of victory. Their mother wailed that their clothes would have to be burned. Their father sternly told them that unless they obeyed him instantly they would have to spend the night alone in the cabin with the skunk which would probably eat them alive in the dark. Duncan ought to have known better than to try to scare the Scalping Scot. Rob Roy said cheerfully that they didn't mind staying in the cabin all night and that they were sure their "bonnie wee beastie" wouldn't hurt them. To silence argument they withdrew farther into the cabin and shut the door on themselves.

"They'll come to no harm," said Sevier, who had been roaring with laughter. "Jimmy, you run up to

the house and ask my wife to give you one of my guns and whatever else you need."

"I don't want anybody pokin' 'round in my cabin when I'm gone," Jimmy said, hesitating and casting anxious glances at his door.

"Don't worry!" Burke shouted. "Nobody'll come within twenty feet of it!" Howls of laughter greeted this remark.

In the pure joy of this incident Ferguson and war were forgotten. Buffeting one another, slapping one another's backs, shouting with mirth, the men ran down to the river's edge, where the cooks were stirring up the fires for supper. While they waited to eat they sang:

"He tied his hair with ribbons and ate his pea soup fried,
An' a little skunk came in an' sat down by his side,
An' that is why this handsome young officer died;
Oh! Twenty brassy buttons in his hide."

Stars were pricking out in the rich blue high over the meadow when Campbell, McDowell, and Shelby with sulky Jimmy Breed in attendance rode off.

Meanwhile Silent Scot and Runner-on-the-Wind were making good time through the pass. Tuleko rode ahead because Andy feared that Ahyuni's "ver' smart" tactics might cripple Brandywine if he himself took the lead. They halted when night came down but took the trail again as the moon rose. As they rode next day in the afternoon sunshine, Tuleko stopped abruptly and pointed to a bush growing low on the trail. He did not need to ex-

plain why. The broken twigs and torn leaves told their own story to both scouts. Some one had been over this trail very recently. They noted other signs of the same sort, especially where the trail narrowed in swinging up to the dugout. Before they reached the old pirate's camp Andy was fearing the worst. In the dugout they found signs in plenty—scraps of venison, charred wood and ashes, matches that had been struck and thrown away so recently that their sticks were not weather-stained. Where the sack of gold had been there was now only a gaping hole in the earth.

"Some man that knew about old Tom's money has been here an' got it," said Andy. Tuleko nodded; then suddenly he darted out of the dugout and ran twenty yards down the trail eastward, peering closely at the brush along the way.

"What are ye doin'?" Andy cried after him. The runner returned presently and said in Delaware, "The man who took the money came from Watauga and he went back to Watauga; for no one has ridden over the rest of the trail beyond the dugout."

"I see what you mean," Andy answered in Tuleko's language. "The old man talked too much about his bag of gold." He was remembering how Jimmy Breed had tried to learn from him the location of the entrance to the pass; and also that Jimmy had gone off hunting and been away for nearly a week. "He might have found the pass," Andy said, "'tis not so verra difficult."

It was a terrible business, as he explained to

Tuleko; because now Jack would have no money with which to buy equipment for some fifteen hundred men. The British would win the War of Independence and America would be under the tyrant's heel forever. What to do? Jack ought to know at once about the money so that he could raise it in another way. After some cogitating he decided that he would remain there with the horses while Tuleko ran down with the letter. Tuleko's speed made it certain that he could meet McDowell, who was crossing by the other pass which also led into the big ravine below. Tuleko would give McDowell the letter, asking him to forward it to General Gates, and then return to Andy at the dugout. And the two of them would start back for Watauga with all speed.

This was accomplished easily enough, but Tuleko exceeded his instructions. As he informed Andy later, on seeing Jimmy with McDowell he had taken great pleasure in calling him a thief.

"I say when he come back Watauga, Tuleko kill him." He grunted contentedly.

"He might not have *done* it," said Andy slowly. "It would be nasty for Jack if his man had stolen the money."

"He *done,*" said Tuleko, with conviction.

The Runner's simple frankness in addressing Jimmy was unfortunate. It gave Jimmy Breed a pretext for leaving McDowell's company. He stormed, almost wept, whined hysterically, as he begged leave to dash back to Watauga and prove

to his benefactor that he had never seen the sack of gold. There had never *been* any sack of gold. Hadn't he said so all along? That Andy was a liar, a mean fellow, too; he didn't like poor Jimmy Breed. From disgust as much as from any sense of justice, McDowell told him to go back. He would find another man to take the letter on, and to fulfill the mission which Sevier had given Breed.

Jimmy Breed turned slowly back, stopped, and waited till McDowell was out of sight. Then he returned, lashing his horse, and sped up the trail Tuleko had taken an hour before. When he gained the dugout he caught a glimpse of Andy and Tuleko on the winding path far below. He primed his rifle and followed them. He would prevent them from reaching Watauga with their news and their suspicions. Perhaps he would tell a story about bad Indians in the pass, and how he had found Andy's and Tuleko's bodies shot and scalped. If it didn't work, if Sevier became suspicious of him, why, he'd take the gold now hidden in his cabin and run off to the caves along the Tennessee River where old Dragging Canoe lived with his Chickamaugan braves. Dragging Canoe's band weren't all Indians; there were outlaws, bandits, criminals of all sorts who had fled from the law—Sam Hoker, too, a cousin of the Biddos. Sam used to be a friend of his seven years ago in Rowan County. He'd get richer with them by robbing and killing settlers and traders than he could by receiving a little money from Carolina Tories for telling them what was going on in

Watauga. They should have paid him twice as much for that tip about Musgrove's Mill, enabling them to take Shelby and Lytle by surprise. And he had told the Biddos where to look for Lytle's wife; he should have got something extra for that. The news of an army being raised to go after Ferguson ought to be worth good pay—if Andy and Tuleko didn't queer his chances of selling it.

Through the dark of nightfall Jimmy Breed saw the glimmer of a fire. The boys had camped for an hour or two waiting for the moon. Jimmy tied his horse by the side of the trail and crept down on them afoot. He guessed that they were taking turns at watching and sleeping. He planned to steal up close to the camp, kill the watcher first, and then the other who would not have the full use of his wits on being suddenly waked from the heavy sleep of a tired body. So he thought.

But it did not happen in quite that way. It was Tuleko of the incredibly sharp ears who kept watch. Tuleko heard the sound of a dislodged pebble as it hit upon another stone. He woke Andy of the catlike eyes. Andy came up out of his sleep as alert as if he had not slept at all and peered steadily into the overhanging blackness.

"There's somebody in the shadow jes' this side o' that big rock," he whispered. "We'll see what kind o' disposeetion he has." He pulled out a small branch from the heap gathered for their fire, set his hat atop of it, and slowly advanced it toward the fire until the crown of the hat was outlined in

the glow. A shot cracked down, missing the hat by a few inches. Instantly Tuleko's rifle spoke. There came a smothered yelp from the darkness above, and the sound of scrambling flight.

"Ye winged him," said Andy. "Now I wonder who 'twas?" There was, however, no time to go up and look. They extinguished the fire, mounted, and rode on. Jimmy Breed, bleeding in the fleshy part of his thigh which the Runner's bullet had pierced, crawled to his horse, climbed painfully to its back, and returned to the dugout for the night. He dared not go on to Watauga limping from Tuleko's bullet.

The same pure silver moon sailing the indigo sky, which looked down on Jimmy Breed mouthing fury in the dugout and Andy and Tuleko riding through the massive hills, shone upon another scene on the bank of the Nolichucky. Into the crisp night air and the pouring silver light emerged two small odorous forms with something frisking after them like a kitten. They wore patches over one eye, made by tearing a black linsey shirt of Jimmy Breed's which they had found with other interesting things inside the cabin. They walked with sticks and limped. In fact they looked as much like Admiral Tom Shark as was possible for two small red-headed Scotch laddies. They panted with the effort they put forth to carry a heavy iron kettle between them. The contents of the kettle clinked and gave back yellow flashes to the moon. Slowly and laboriously they reached the nearest cook pit on the river shore.

With their sticks they spaded the earth and ashes as they had heard Old One-Eye say he used to dig the seashore and bury his treasure in those far-off Indian islands where the moon was as bright as the sun.

"Harkee, pretty Rob Roy; sink her down, lads!"

"Yo ho for Jolly Roger!" So they caroled to each other delightedly while they buried the gold.

Thoughts almost as piratical as theirs went through their brother Andy's mind as he rode that night. Jack had to have money for his army. And he must not go to the Governor for it. Andy remembered the words of his father, spoken only two days ago; namely, that there was money enough in the land office to buy a rifle, powder, and lead for every man in Watauga. Honest Duncan MacPhail couldn't *give* the state's money to Jack, of course. But—suppose somebody raided the land office and took the money? Old One-Eye, for instance, would do it like a shot.

"No doubt ye're a verra sinfu' man, Andy MacPhail," he mused. "But I'm thinkin' I could forgive ye for turnin' pirate if 'twas to help Pretty Jack. Oh, ay!"

He would have a talk with Admiral Tom Shark the first thing in the morning.

CHAPTER V

KING'S MOUNTAIN

It has been noticed that age and rheumatism had not affected Old One-Eye's voice, trained to bellow orders above the raging sea. Now, as he heard Andy's sad story of the theft of his gold, his rage and grief reverberated like a miniature typhoon from wall to wall of his smithy.

"Who stole my gold?" he roared, bringing down his huge hammer with all his force upon the anvil. Clang! went the anvil. "Who stole Old Tom's gold?" Clang! "Some thievin', yellow-livered landlubber"—clang!—"I'll swear to that"—clang! "Oh, if I had him here"—clang!—"I'd stuff him with my gold an' melt him in the forge an' hammer him into a hundred golden horseshoes for my pretty Jack's army!"—clang, clang, clang!

He flung away the hammer and seized his old cutlass which always hung on the smithy wall, and which he kept sharpened and as bright as the moon. He whirled it through the air over his head, shouting:

"Let me get at him, the rogue! I'll carve him too small for fish bait! Ay, minnows couldn't find him! Tadpoles, neither! The villain—the coward —the dog! He's a lawyer—he's a judge—a hang-

man—a customs officer—a coast guard—land scum! To rob an old Admiral o' the seas—rob brave an' bold Captain Shark o' his lawful gold! Land scum!"

The cutlass dropped from his hand and he sank down on the block seat, panting. The purple dye of rage in his cheeks and brow made his seamy scar stand out, a livid gash. His one eye, with its inflamed lids, looked like a red spark burning in a glass. Andy regarded him critically.

"Ye shouldna take on so, Tom," he said. "Ye might have a fit an' have to stay in yer bed. An' that wouldna do at all, for I'm thinkin' ye can maybe help Jack yet—if ye keep yer health."

"Help him; ay, that's the word—help him," Shark gasped. He gulped down the mugful of water which Tuleko brought him from the pail by the door. Andy knew by the set of Tuleko's lip that he wanted to laugh. Tuleko always looked upon Old One-Eye as a piece of pure comedy. But today he evidently felt that poor Tom couldn't bear being laughed at.

"If Jack but lived on the coast, now. An' Captain Shark had his pretty ship an' his merry crew free an' lawful on the high seas once more. Ah, lad," he sighed, "those were happy days! We'd get Jack gold a-plenty. Ay, though we turned the blue sea red in fishin' for it!"

Andy remarked casually that all the money Jack needed was in the land office; his father had said so.

"Why didn't you tell me that before?" Shark cried.

"Well," Andy replied, choosing his words carefully, "'twould do no good to talk about it, because the money belongs to the Gov'nor."

"The more reason for takin' it!" Shark yelled at him.

"Maybe so," said Andy; but, he continued, Duncan MacPhail couldn't give it to Jack because he was in honor bound to serve the Governor first and protect the state's property. It was, he explained, a sort of oath or promise, a hard-and-fast bond. And Duncan, being a Scot and a man of honor, would shoot to kill or be shot to death himself rather than prove unfaithful to his trust.

Old One-Eye sprang up, shaking his fists. He stamped up and down the smithy cursing all governors. Governors, he informed Andy, were the pests of the earth. They made cowards of brave men; they turned good men such as Duncan into rascals; they crippled bold and venturesome men worse than rheumatism and old age. For his part he classed governors with devil fish, sea serpents, moldy salt pork, yellow fever, and hangmen. A crying shame it was that Duncan MacPhail should fire a rifle or receive a bullet in his own breast to please a governor!

Andy agreed with that sentiment. In fact, he admitted he had been thinking that very thing, when he stopped at the land office and borrowed Duncan's gun on his way to the smithy. Duncan was sitting guard over the money now without a weapon. If robbers came, he would be helpless.

"Oh, ho!" shouted Old Shark. "Ah, but you're a smart lad! Ho, but you're a bold lad! A lad after Old Tom's own heart! So you are! We'll after the Gov'nor's money, my lads. Here's three of us, well armed, too, against one lonely man without gun or cutlass!"

Andy's lip moved as if he checked a smile.

"He's no' so lonely as ye think. Rob Roy is wi' him. An' I never saw them so full o' fight. Ye'd think Rob Roy had been off on some grand adventure, like the tales ye've told them, an' come home golden kings o' the sea. All the scrubbin' an' spankin' their mother's given them hasna damped the spirit o' the Scalpin' Scot."

Before Tom could reply there came a chorused shout of "Hullos" from up the road and the clatter of hoofs. Tuleko leaped to the door.

"Renz, Roche," he explained. In a moment two of Renz's sons and five of La Roche's younger boys drew up at the door.

"Did you get the gold?" they shouted to Andy, as they threw themselves from their saddles. They rushed into the smithy, full of excitement.

"No. A thief had been an' got it," Andy answered.

"But cheer up, my hearties!" cried Old Tom. "You've come in the nick of time. There's money enough in the land office an' we'll march in an' take it for Jack."

There was a wild hubbub for several minutes;

but, when it subsided, the nine boys in the old pirate's shop were of one mind about setting out to do or die for Jack. One of the Renz boys thought that they ought to be disguised so that Duncan would be unable to tell the Governor the names of the men who had robbed him. It would be Duncan's duty to tell, of course; but if he couldn't, why, then, he just couldn't.

"Now, isn't he a smart lad?" Old Shark exclaimed delightedly. "I'll make masked highwaymen of the lot of you. Runner, get down that big deerhide off my bunk. At it with your blades, my hearties! Slash off pieces to fit over your eyes an' as far south as your mouths; an' cut strings to tie 'em on! Heigh-ho! It's an evil day when bold buccaneers must hide their faces from the foe!"

For a while the only sounds in the smithy were the ripping of deerskin and the heavy, irregular breathing of nine ecstatic and excited boys. They fastened the deerskin strings, by means of knots, into each end of their masks, and cut slits for eyeholes. Andy, looking up, saw that though Old Tom already had his mask on he was busy with a much larger piece of deerskin. In silence, interestedly, he watched him make marks on it with a bit of charred wood and then affix it to a long hickory stick.

"What are ye doin' Tom?" he asked.

"Makin' a banner fit for brave men to follow. Ah, the old flag! the old flag! It'll do me a world

of good to sail under the Jolly Roger once more," Old Shark answered in a deep, sentimental sigh. He lifted it up so that they could all see the crudely drawn skull and crossbones in the center of the flap of deerhide. He shifted the emblem to his left hand, seized his old cutlass in his right, and went at a limping run out of the smithy.

"Come on, my hearties!" he yelled. "Every lad should shoulder his musket an' swing his cutlass! We'll show 'em how Henry Morgan stormed Porto Bello a hundred years ago!"

Their moccasined feet padding through the dust at a slow trot, up the road toward the land office went the Wataugan buccaneers. Old One-Eye led the way, his steel thrust forward, his flag held high. The boys, suiting their pace to his limping trot, kept behind him. Even Runner-on-the-Wind seemed to feel that this was Tom Shark's hour and forebore to sprint past him. The flush of eager excitement tinted the old pirate's tanned and wrinkled face, his one eye burned fiercely. He panted and muttered broken phrases, queer words, some part Spanish or French, from the buccaneer's jargon, and names which, like "Henry Morgan" and "Porto Bello," the boys had never heard before. They did not know how the fact that they were so young had sent Old Shark's memory back over a span of more than sixty years to his own youth, when as a lad of sixteen he had shipped under the black flag of the notorious Stede Bonnet.

Three horsemen emerged from a mountain trail

and watched the odd procession with no little interest. They were John Sevier, his oldest son, and a settler named Campbell, who was one of Sevier's closest friends.

"Now what do you suppose the Admiral is up to?" Nolichucky Jack asked. "A pirate flag, and masks, and every man armed! That is Andy's yellow hair, I'll swear. And the Runner—you couldn't mistake the grace of Tuleko's body."

"They appear to be headed for the land office," said Campbell, "and something warns me that we'd best follow them."

Inside the land office, on the window sill sat Rob Roy. They wore new suits, their faces shone from much scouring, their red curls were still damp and pungent from a soaking in rum and hot water. There hung about them now only the faintest suggestion of their adventure with their new pet in Jimmy Breed's cabin. Duncan MacPhail stood before the open door of a closet, looking at his pages of records and the currency in deerskin bags on the shelves.

"Hands up!"

Duncan wheeled to see masked men with muskets pouring into the cabin. He reached mechanically toward the pegs where his rifle usually hung, then remembered that it was not there. His hands went up as the point of Old One-Eye's sword prodded him in the chest.

"What d'ye want?" he asked, too amazed to recognize anybody.

"It's the money we're after. Stand aside!" Shark bellowed. "Some of you lads seize him an' tie him up."

Two La Roches and two Renzes grabbed the bewildered entry taker and began to tie his hands with Pierre La Roche's woolen sash. This was too much for Rob Roy. Their own father, and a MacPhail, to be treated that way! With a scream of rage they precipitated themselves upon Duncan's aggressors. They bit, they clawed, they pummeled; then they clutched Jean La Roche round the ankle and, with a mighty effort, overbalanced him. The three of them came down in a sprawling heap on the floor. Meanwhile Tom was sweeping the money off the shelves. His old fingers twitched and his whole body shook with excitement.

" 'Tis like old times," he mumbled, as he tossed the bags of money over his shoulder to the boys behind.

"Admiral, you old villain, what's all this?" Sevier strode into the office. "So you've gone back to pirating, eh?"

"To be sure, 'tis Old One-Eye," said Duncan. "He took my breath away an' I didn't know him."

"Nor your own son, either?" Sevier laughed. "Andy, explain this."

Awkwardly, because he felt foolish at being caught, Silent Scot told his tale—how Old Tom's sack of gold had been stolen, and how he had racked his brains to find a way to get money for the army. Sevier clapped him on the back and roared with

laughter. Then he swung Old One-Eye round and embraced him.

"Old friend," he said, "I wouldn't disappoint you for worlds. You're a loyal comrade and a man after my own heart. I'm going to take this money, but without a mask on my face." Then, turning to Duncan, whom the boys had set free, he said, "I will borrow this money from the state; and I will pledge my property, as security for repayment of the loan."

"Well, Jack," said Duncan gravely, "ye understand my position. I can't *offeecially* hand ye over the money. But, considerin' there's pirates about, I won't try to stop ye from takin' it. So, take it Jack, wi' Duncan MacPhail's verra good will." Then to Andy he said, "Son, I'll thank ye to gi' me back my rifle."

Although the matter was settled in this peaceable way, with Sevier binding himself—or his heirs if he were killed—to repay the state, Old One-Eye always declared that it was the old flag, the Jolly Roger, that did the business. He reckoned this exploit second only—both in valor and in political importance—to Sir Francis Drake's raid on Panama!

The money from land sales, which had been waiting shipment to the Governor across the mountains, did indeed go over the mountains, but not to the Governor. It went into Morgantown and bought powder and lead for the men of Tennessee. For ten days or so Wataugans were busy making bullets, practicing with targets, repairing guns, sharpening

tomahawks, and drilling. McDowell's messenger came in with the news that they could count on eight or nine hundred men from the Back Country. He brought other news which somewhat troubled Sevier, though it delighted every other man by the western waters. The letter had been delivered to Gates, and he, the messenger, had waited, as long as he dared delay, for an answer; but Gates had sent none. In short, Gates had ignored the letter. No one could understand why. It did not occur to those sincere and simple-minded frontiersmen that the warning about "not disgusting the soldiery" might have offended the rather petty and pompous soul of Horatio Gates! They showed their joy by composing some more verses.

At dawn on the twenty-sixth of September Sevier's and Shelby's men, and some of McDowell's troops who had escaped into the mountains after another unsuccessful brush with Ferguson, mustered at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga River—over a thousand strong. The old men who could not go, the men who were staying behind to guard the homes from Indians, and all the women and children were there, too. Conspicuous among the figures moving through the grove was the Reverend Samuel Doak, Watauga's beloved pastor. Like the prophets of old, a haunt of nature was his cathedral that day—a priest in fringed buckskin jerkin and leggings, his pulpit a sycamore stump.

The muted thunder of hoofs rolled over the valley as the men, by small companies, arrived at the

Shoals. Andy and Tuleko rode up with Duncan between them. Duncan was to remain in command of Watauga's defenses. Immediately behind them rode the other men from the Nolichucky such as old La Roche with his tribe of sons and Gustav Renz with his sons and nephews and several of Sevier's sons. Sevier himself was already there, conversing earnestly with Shelby and Doak, with Old One-Eye hovering about, never very far from his elbow. On the mountainside a number of horsemen guarded a herd of cattle, which the army was taking along for food. Besides the cattle, the army food supply consisted of a small bag of ground corn and maple sugar, mixed, for each man. Their drink would be the mountain streams.

As the dawn began to sift in flakes of light through the thick leafage and to brighten upon the hurrying waters of the river, Samuel Doak climbed upon a high stump and summoned the whole company to follow him in singing a hymn. Some fifteen hundred voices—men's, women's, and children's—rose in swelling chorus with the famous sacred song of the Covenanters, "O God Our Help in Ages Past." The hymn ended and the pastor addressed his flock with that brilliant and fiery oratory which made him a noted man in frontier annals. He took the story of Gideon for his text; that Gideon, the herder, who was called from his mountain home to become a warrior and to deliver his people from a powerful foe.

"With the sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

cried the pastor, raising his hands in final benediction. And all the women took up the cry:

"With the sword of the Lord and our Gideons!"

To the shout of the women, like bugles on the dawn, the frontier army dashed out upon the mountain trail.

The last thing Andy saw in looking back was Admiral Shark limping along the road after them shouting strange words and waving his beloved Jolly Roger.

Andy and Tukelo rode together and talked in low tones; and their talk was of Jimmy Breed. Only an hour before the muster, Jimmy Breed had ridden into Watauga and Jimmy had told of being thrown from his horse and of injuring his knee so that he still limped a trifle; and, generally, he had much increased the two scouts' suspicions of him.

"Tuleko shoot um. T'at's why Breed lame," was Tuleko's conviction. Andy also felt sure now that Jimmy had stolen Tom's gold, and that he had fired that shot into their camp in the hills; but he had not told Tom nor Sevier. He and Tuleko meant to watch Jimmy and find out where he had hidden the gold, catch him in the act of handling it, and then turn him over to Constable Burke for fear that Sevier's soft heart, and his generous loyalty to every man who had ever served him in any capacity, might interfere with the course of justice. To-day, for the first time, Andy began to suspect Jimmy of being a Tory as well as a thief. That was because

he heard Jimmy asking questions about the army. How many were they? How many would Campbell bring? And McDowell? And the other officers, man by man? And what was the route? And just where would the officers east of the mountains join them? *What were the plans?* Then, too, why did Jimmy, with his "sprained knee," insist on joining the army when Sevier urged him to remain in Watauga? Oh, it was all very well for Breed to mouth loudly about being no coward, and how he would ride till he dropped and fight to the bitter end for liberty and country! The louder he voiced his noble sentiments the less Andy believed him. As they rode on upward by the twisting trail that wound between Roan and Yellow mountains, Andy and Tuleko tried to keep close to Jimmy Breed, or at least not to lose sight of him if other horsemen swung in ahead of them. Jimmy had been given a fresh horse, one of Sevier's racers, named Starlight for his white face. Starlight was swift and as sure-footed as a goat; and so Jimmy passed out of his two watchers' ken.

"We'll come up with him later," Andy said. Tuleko nodded.

But they didn't! When the army paused on the top of the range, where the loose snow lay to their ankles, for another hour's drill and rifle practice, Jimmy Breed was missing. With him had disappeared another man called Hank Davy, a rough fellow whom none of Andy's friends knew very well.

Their departure was strange enough to rouse even Sevier's suspicions; so Andy told him frankly what he and Tuleko believed about Jimmy.

"Boys," said Sevier, "if that's the truth, then Jimmy has raced off ahead of us to get in touch with Ferguson. And Ferguson will meet us at the eastern entrance to the pass, before we can join forces with Campbell and Cleveland and McDowell."

"What'll you do, Jack?" some one yelled, above the growls of rage that went round.

"Andy, where's that trail by Tom's dugout?" Sevier asked.

Andy's blue eyes snapped with eagerness.

"On the other side, Jack. Tuleko pointed it out to me a while back. We could see a rock we knew, plain. 'Tis a better trail than this an' much shorter, too. Look there!" He pointed down below among the crags. "That's it. But we'll lose time goin' back to the mouth o' it."

"No, we won't! We daren't! We'll dive straight down the cliff side onto it! Now, boys," he raised his voice, turning to his men, "it's life or death for us. I'm going first. If you see me break my neck you can take your choice about following me. But so long as my neck's sound, I expect you to come on after me." A wild cheer greeted his words. This was the sort of talk they loved from Nolichucky Jack.

Sevier set his horse at the rocky and snowy rim of the cliff and plunged over and down the steep incline. The men above watched him for a moment,

saw him crash through snowy pines, leap a fallen log, sway and hold back as the mare slipped and then regained her footing, then plunge on, down, down.

Andy could stand it no longer.

"Come on!" he yelled, "Tuleko an' me first! 'Tis *our* trail!" He and the Runner on Brandywine and Ahyuni plunged down after Jack. With shouts that ended in a war whoop, the frontier army followed over the brink. It was terrible and perilous going, but no man there was taking his first riding lesson that day. They were all horsemen, accustomed to rough going and to taking big chances in the faith that experience and intelligence would bring them safely through. In an hour they were on Andy's trail, and were racing like mad for the eastern gate. They made a brief stop at dark to light torches of pitchy wood and then rode on again, a wild army of flame lighting and defying the unknown dark of the hills, the glare of their torches casting a panorama of eerie and fantastic shadows on the antique rock. At dawn they stopped once more and ate some of their meal and sugar. They no longer had the cattle, for they had turned them loose early in the day not far from Watauga because the cattle's pace was too slow. Andy and Tuleko rode ahead all the way after they reached the trail. They were the first to come out of the black shadows and the bleak chill of the rocks into the moonlit pastures on the eastern side of Gillespie's Gap. They pushed on to Quaker Meadows where

Colonel Cleveland with three hundred and fifty men —"Cleveland's Bulldogs"—swung into their column. On their route, as they pressed on, they were joined by Campbell with his four hundred men, and by the two McDowells, Charles and Joseph, with Burke County militiamen, and by other officers well known in their day if less remembered in ours. And as the army marched on, farm doors and gates along the way opened and a man or two came through, rifle over shoulder, and got into step. Sometimes it was a man of years, not infrequently it was a boy of sixteen, or fourteen, or even twelve.

They heard news of Ferguson here. He was marching south to get in touch with Cornwallis. They went on after him.

Despite Gates' impoliteness the army now had a general. It happened somewhat in this way.

"Jack," said Shelby, "here we are with a large force and a dozen officers who are all of equal rank. We can't go into battle, especially an important battle like this, without a general. It's never done."

"True, Isaac. The dignity of this cause demands a general. What shall we do? Elect one of us?"

"Exactly. I have thought it over. Do you realize that every one of us except Campbell is a North Carolinian? If any North Carolinian is chosen, jealousy will arise among the others or among their men. Also, if we choose a Carolinian, McDowell will expect that honor as our senior and a distinguished soldier. I consider that McDowell's age unfits him. We need a young man."

At this time McDowell was on the verge of forty, and Shelby, who was not quite thirty, was perhaps right in refusing to risk the great cause under a general who was, according to his opinion, in his dotage!

"Campbell is young," Sevier agreed, "and he is the only Virginian. If these are the chief qualities of a general, he has them." And so Campbell was elected and took command!

The Overhill men and their Back Country allies swept on southward. Like a swarm of locusts they spread over the vast fields of the Tory farmer at the Cowpens. It is said that they mowed his fifty acres of corn in an hour. They rested and feasted themselves and their mounts. Here, too, they captured two men whom Ferguson had sent out with a letter to Cornwallis, telling him that a Tory spy—Jimmy Breed, no doubt—had just brought him word of the frontier army coming down upon him, numbering over a thousand. His own force, he stated, was much depleted, as some were away on leave and others were pursuing a small body of Georgian Patriots to the south. He had, in short, less than eight hundred men with him. Would Cornwallis send Lieutenant Tarleton and reserves to his assistance at once?

"Where is Ferguson now?" Campbell demanded. The messenger answered that Ferguson had gone into camp on the top of King's Mountain in South Carolina just below the North Carolina line.

Asked how they might know Ferguson when they

saw him, he said sullenly: "He rides a white horse and is wearing a checkered dust cloak over his uniform."

The messenger added that Ferguson had sent out two other messengers also who had probably, by now, reached Cornwallis at Charlotte. He could not know, of course, that those messengers had mistaken their direction, stopped at a farmhouse which they believed to be a Tory's home but which belonged to a loyal Patriot, and had been seized and prevented from continuing their journey. Cornwallis was not sending aid to Ferguson that day. He did not know that he needed it.

Time was now the all-important factor. The frontiersmen must come up with Ferguson and engage him before the British officer, Tarleton, whom they supposed Cornwallis had sent, could reach him.

"Where's King's Mountain?" Campbell asked.

"I know the place," McDowell answered. "There's a rocky spur juts out from the ridge. It's not more than sixty feet high and it's flat on top, about six hundred yards long and a hundred and twenty wide at its broadest end. It's a natural fortress, with forested sides and a bulwark of rocks and boulders along the rim. Joe and I had our hunting camp there three years ago. The trees up its flanks will make good shelter for us as we climb. There's forest for miles all around it, too. So, if we go quietly, we ought to be almost at the hilltop before he knows we're coming at all—though he'll have lookout men, of course."

Hurry, hurry—that was the word! The army was now about eighteen hundred strong, but some were afoot, and others had slow horses. They did not need eighteen hundred men to rout less than eight hundred. At nine o'clock that night, October 6th, 1780, nine hundred and ten of the hardiest warriors on the fleetest mounts, chiefly Sevier's Wataugans, Shelby's Holston boys, McDowell and Campbell and their own men, set out at full speed.

Andy's heart was throbbing, almost bursting, with excitement. He had made a plan and had brought into it Tuleko and the Renz and La Roche boys and Sevier's sixteen-year-old son. They were to keep together and work their way toward Ferguson, surround and capture him, but not fire on him. To fetch the mountain man home, alive and unhurt, to spend his days in Watauga had become Andy's great dream.

Rain poured down in torrents on the Overhill men all that night as they rode. Their horses slipped, floundered, fell in the oozy mud, were pulled out, steadied, and urged on again. Daybreak saw them crossing the Broad River at Cherokee Ford. On they dashed all the forenoon in the pelting rain with no halt for food or rest. Early in the afternoon, the rain ceased and the sun came out. At three o'clock they dismounted in the woods at the base of King's Mountain and tethered their steaming horses. The first order went round:

"Every man throw the priming out of his pan, pick his touchhole, prime anew, examine bullets, and

make sure that everything is in readiness for battle."

They spread out and circled the hill. The plan was to surround the enemy, hold him on top of the hill, and keep pressing on upward on all sides while pouring in their fire. There was a good chance that most of the answering fire would go over their heads. Their moccasined feet made no sound on the soaked earth; they moved from behind one tree to the next, each man seeing to his own cover—silent and invisible as Indians in ambuscade. But there was a gap in the forest where Shelby's men were climbing. A lookout above spied them and sounded the alarm. Ferguson sprang to horse, blowing his silver whistle to summon his men to attack.

Unaware that other warriors in fringed deerskin were creeping up on the three other sides of the hill, the British centered their efforts against Shelby's contingent. Hastily fitting their bayonets they charged down on the Holston men, who gave way before cold steel—a method of warfare they were unfamiliar with. But the Wataugans creeping up the side of the hill fired into the British as they charged down. Nearer and nearer the crest climbed the frontiersmen on all sides and presently a ring of fire circled the British position.

From every quarter good marksmen took aim at Ferguson who, with his usual contempt of danger, rode up and down among his troops shouting encouragement, but no bullet reached him. Two horses were killed under him. He mounted a third

and again plunged into the thick of the fight. During a lull the sound of racing hoofs below reached the warriors on the hill. A cry of alarm went around:

"Tarleton has come! We're trapped!"

The undisciplined Overhill army wavered. If a few turned and fled they might sweep the remainder with them. Sevier, to forestall that peril, dashed out, a target for every British rifle on the hilltop, and rode along the lines shrilling the war whoop. The Wataugans first, then the others, took up the wild note and, inspired by Sevier's courage, launched into the fray again. In a moment they heard echoing war whoops from the woods below, and realized that the pounding hoofs which had almost caused a panic were not those of Tarleton's cavalry. It was a body of their own men, left at the Cowpens, who had caught up with them.

Andy and his own company of boys, who were bent on capturing Ferguson, had worked up with the front ranks of the Wataugans to the top of the hill. He heard the man whom he recognized as Captain de Peyster who had been with Ferguson at the rescue of Mrs. Lytle, shout to Ferguson:

"These are the same yelling devils that were at Musgrove's Mill."

A British soldier elevated his bayonet with a white handkerchief fluttering from it. Andy saw Ferguson race for it and slash it off with his sword.

"Huzza! Huzza, my brave lads!" he heard him shout, "the day is our own!"

By this time there was hand-to-hand fighting on the hilltop. The British, largely outnumbered to begin with, had suffered terrible losses. Their morale was gone. White flags went up, too many to be cut down.

"Surrender," De Peyster pleaded with his commander.

"Surrender to those damned bandits? Never!" Ferguson shouted. He looked once more at his troops who were throwing down their weapons, then at De Peyster riding to meet Campbell and tendering his sword. Then spurring his bleeding horse, he leaped the pitiful barricade made by his dead and dying men and charged at full speed into the Wataugans, hacking right and left with his sword.

This crucial moment found Andy unprepared. Seeing De Peyster offer his sword to Campbell, Andy had supposed that Ferguson also meant to surrender in spite of his scornful, "Never!" It was no longer necessary to capture him. And so Andy was not ready when Ferguson made his mad dash into the Wataugans bent not upon escape, for that would have been hopeless, but upon death.

"Come on, boys!" Andy yelled, and started, just a few moments too late. With Tuleko and the others following him, he pushed and drove through the mêlée toward Ferguson. He saw Constable Burke thrust the muzzle of his gun against Ferguson's chest and pull the trigger. There was no shot, for the powder flashed in the pan; and Ferguson

struck away the iron muzzle with his heavy sword which snapped off at the hilt. Now the boys broke through. Andy gained Ferguson's side and grasped his left hand, rising to swing another blow with the only weapon he had left, the broken hilt. Tuleko caught the reins and pulled the horse up short. Both boys were stooping, remembering the danger of chance shots.

"Mr. Ferguson," Andy cried, "it's Andy MacPhail, yer friend."

He saw Ferguson turn sharply and look down at him; he met once more for a brief instant the burning black eyes he knew—then there was a roar of guns, and Ferguson's body jerked from the saddle pierced by eight bullets. The broken sword hilt, falling from the dead mountain man's hand, struck Silent Scot's breast with a blow as light as a caress.

Andy was aware that Tuleko, exerting his full strength, pulled the frenzied horse back on its haunches, and that some of the other boys seized Ferguson's body, freed it from the stirrup from which it dragged, and laid it on the earth. It seemed to him that all this did not matter, that in fact it was happening a long way off. He saw it in a dim, distorted way through a dark red rain falling stickily over his eyes. He did not even know that a bullet from one of the dozen guns aimed at the mountain man had scarred his own forehead. He felt curiously weak and vague. He was hardly conscious of his own act as he stooped, fumbled along the sod in the growing darkness that enveloped him, found the

sword hilt and thrust it into his pouch. Then, the blackness conquered. Silent Scot slipped down on the reddened and trampled sod in a dead faint.

An hour later he lay on Ferguson's blanket in Ferguson's tent on the summit where Sevier and Campbell were making their temporary camp. He remembered poignantly that morning after Musgrove's Mill when he had slept in Ferguson's tent and felt the mountain man spreading his blanket over him. His head was bound up. It was a nasty wound, but he would not die of it—had it been a quarter of an inch deeper, though, his body would have stayed there on King's Mountain with Ferguson's. "Let me die among hills," Ferguson had said that other day, so long ago, by the Brandywine. Well, he had been granted that prayer.

The smell of roasting cattle thickened the air. The Overhill men had killed the enemy's beeves and set them on fires to cook. They had had neither food nor sleep for eighteen hours. On the lower slope men were digging trenches to bury the dead. Tuleko, seeing that Andy was awake now, crawled up beside him and told him that he and Sevier's son and Fritz Renz had captured Jimmy Breed. Jimmy had been with Ferguson's troops; but after the battle he had tried to make off down the back of the hill. The Runner had seen him cross a gap below and, shouting to the other boys, had sprinted after him and got him. They wanted to hang him, Tuleko said, but Jack wouldn't allow it. Tuleko was deeply disappointed because he could not march

home to Watauga with Jimmy Breed's scalp dangling from his belt.

At any other time the news about Jimmy would have filled Andy with excitement. Now it was wholly unimportant. Jimmy Breed, coward and traitor, was too small a figure to enter his mind which was filled with the picture of a heroic death; and with a grief, perhaps the sharpest he would ever know. If Ferguson had lived and been taken to Watauga to spend his remaining years, Andy had intended to tell the Wataugans how the mountain man had refused to fire on Washington, because that would have made them Ferguson's friends. Now that Ferguson was dead, he knew, without reasoning about it, that he would never tell. It was as if that look into Ferguson's soul had been a gift bestowed on him in sacred confidence by the strange, savage, yet noble figure that had passed; a glory and a vision to be kept locked deep in his own secretive Highland heart for always.

"Mountain men, both." His lips framed the words silently. His fingers crept into his pouch and fastened about Ferguson's sword hilt, and his eyelids closed quickly over the salt sting of sorrow.

CHAPTER VI

TULEKO GOES SCALPING

It was a long march home from King's Mountain and a slow one, because of wounded men to be helped walk or to be carried by their comrades. There was no well-equipped ambulance corps nor were there nurses nor surgeons in the Overhill army. On the trampled, reddened slope of King's Mountain the mortally wounded lay waiting for the coming of death and the night. The living who were able to march had to make off with what speed they could, lest Tarleton should appear with British reserves and turn their victory into defeat. They must hasten, content with their immediate laurels—they had rid the border of its Wolf. How much more they had done could not be apparent to them so soon. The next few months would show that Ferguson's death had robbed the British of their chief weapon in the Back Country. In fact, it broke the Tory spirit. The gallant and dramatic adventure of the Overhill men was soon followed by the victory of another frontiersman, Daniel Morgan, at the Cowpens. Meanwhile Nathaniel Greene succeeded Gates in command of the Southern Army. His strategy compelled Cornwallis to divide his forces and, though the British were to win the next

heat, the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, Greene would make them pay so heavily for their success that Tarleton later called it "the pledge of ultimate defeat." Three days afterward Cornwallis would be retreating toward Wilmington. In a sense, then, King's Mountain was the pivot of the war's revolving stage which swung the British from their succession of victories toward the surrender at Yorktown.

Little they guessed of all this, those weary but dauntless mountain men, riding and tramping on homeward through the dropping dusk, with ears alert for the foe's bugle in the woods behind them. No doubt they promised themselves a good rest at home now that the Wolf could no longer harry them; good hunting, fair days and safe in the cornfields, leisurely twilights by the cabin's open fire.

Hunting was the subject which Silent Scot and Runner-on-the-Wind were discussing, when Nolichucky Jack signaled them to him.

"Boys," he said, "there's such a rage gnawing this crowd against Jimmy, since they found out he was giving information to Ferguson, that I'm doubtful of saving his neck."

Andy nodded solemnly. He was thinking of the terrible scene at Bickerstaff Meadows, a few miles behind, where now nine corpses dangled from the trees. Those men had been no worse traitors than Jimmy Breed, but they had not been fortunate, like him, in belonging to Sevier's company.

"I've told him to slip off home when we camp," Sevier went on. "The others will feel less blood-

thirsty to-morrow anyway; but I think it best he shouldn't get off alone. There seems little doubt that he stole the Admiral's gold and I don't want him to dig it up, wherever he's hidden it, and ride away with it. I count on making him give it back. I want him followed, but I don't want him to know it."

"Tuleko can do it. He's a shade better than me at that," said Andy.

"H'm," said Sevier in a long-drawn, meditative way. "But I really want Jimmy to get home safe, Andy. The question is, if Tuleko follows him, *will he?*"

"I see what you mean, Jack." Andy's eyes twinkled. Then he spoke gravely in Delaware to the Runner. Tuleko, his face impassive, answered him briefly. Presently Andy gave Sevier the gist of Tuleko's reply as he had understood it. Andy knew that in situations of this sort, what Tuleko did *not* say was most likely to be the thing he meant.

"Ye understand, Jack, that what would happen to Jimmy would be an accident. Tuleko couldn't help it, ye see, if an accident happened to Jimmy. An' 'tis my *conveection,* Jack, that the accident *would* happen."

"No, I can't have that. Jimmy is no good, of course, but, as you go along through life, Andy, you'll find plenty of men made of poor stuff—no backbone, no honor, no loyalty, no real affections, and hungry for money. They'll puzzle you, as they puzzle me. And you'll see, too, that it's better to treat them

with the charity they need. Better save your bullet for an animal you can at least use for meat!"

"If I go wi' Tuleko, there won't be any accidents. An' I make no doubt we two can go as quiet as one," Andy suggested.

"Then I take it as settled," Sevier looked relieved.

"Well—in a way, Jack. But I'm warnin' ye that if he spots us an' tries to kill us, as he did afore, I'll not be the one to be worryin' about accidents befallin' him! He's safe so long as he plays no tricks."

"That satisfies me," Sevier said heartily. He gave no more thought to Andy and Tuleko. He had confidence that they would perform whatever they undertook.

The two scouts held a rapid consultation. Tuleko suggested that they decamp at once, before Jimmy got started, and take the trail by Old Tom's dugout. He said that Jimmy Breed would certainly go by that short trail if he were really going home to Watauga. Furthermore it was possible that Jimmy had hidden the gold somewhere else in the dugout or near it instead of taking it home. In that case he might dig it up and flee with it to some of his old Tory friends on the east side of the mountains. Andy admitted that was possible, though he thought it more likely that the gold was buried somewhere on Sevier's land, probably under the floor of Jimmy's own cabin.

"I wonder now why nobody's been lookin' there

for it," he said, wrinkling his brow. It did seem strange that, when several Wataugans now believed that Jimmie had stolen the money, no one had searched the cabin. Then suddenly he remembered.

"The skunk!" he chortled. "The bonnie beastie! He's the watchdog for Old Shark's gold! An' Rob Roy! Oh, ay! I make no doubt Rob Roy's found the gold if 'twas in the cabin; for they'd ransack it from sod to roof. There's a power o' energy in Rob Roy. That's the answer. I'll be bound—yon skunk. The bonnie stinkin' beastie!" he wound up lovingly.

Andy had another thought in wanting to reach the Nolichucky ahead of Jimmy. Mrs. Sevier might be alone except for the younger children. He would not put it beyond a low scoundrel like Jimmy to terrorize her and rob Sevier's house and then ride off on the beautiful racer, Starlight, perhaps to join the Chickamaugans in the caves along the Tennessee River. More than one bad white man from Watauga had thrown in his lot with Chief Dragging Canoe and his band.

Tuleko and Andy slipped away about six hours ahead of Jimmy, who remained with Sevier that night and rode off at the first streak of dawn. When they reached the dugout in another early morning they had plenty of light and time in which to make a thorough search.

"Breed take gol' Watauga," the Runner grunted after a fruitless half hour. Andy nodded. The search had been chiefly a matter of form with him.

Andy was banking on the skunk. He confided his theory to Tuleko.

"If Rob Roy found the gold—an' I'm not doubtin' they did—they never said a word of it. An' there's no guessin' what they've done with it!"

Tuleko grinned. He said he had promised to make each twin a bow, and arrows tipped with red feathers, as soon as he reached home. He believed he could wring the desired information from them by threatening to give the bows and arrows to the twins of La Roche's second son, whom Rob Roy did not like mainly because they also were twins and felt injured in not being the *only* twins. Andy agreed that it was a good idea. In some way, the truth had to be forced out of those small, secretive, and bellicose urchins. The two scouts watched from old Tom's roof—a vantage point from which they could see down the eastern valley for miles—until Jimmy came into view far below and took the turn toward this pass. Assured now of his intent to return to Watauga, they mounted again and dashed along the trail westward, so as to be well out of his sight and hearing when he reached the dugout.

In Watauga they found a great stir—men on horseback with as many children as they could carry; wagons rumbling in carrying women, old men, and children from the outlying bounds of the colony, and hastening back for other families under armed convoy. The news which greeted them was so tragic that it almost put Jimmy Breed and the gold out of their minds entirely. The dread Chicka-

maugans were on the warpath, led by the most fiendish and relentless paleface hater of his time, Chief Dragging Canoe. He it was who had resisted from the first every sale of land made by the Indians west of the Appalachians to white men; and, failing to balk the transfer, had turned on the pioneer purchasers with somber brow and uplifted arm and had prophesied to them that they would find their western home a "dark and bloody ground." He had done his best to fulfill his own prophecy. He made peace treaties only when so badly beaten that his braves compelled him to do so under threat of deposing him; and he kept those treaties only until he had traded for enough rifles, tomahawks, powder and lead to arm his band, augmented by the recruits he had won among the Cherokees and the white bandits and criminals from the settlements. He was a powerful medicine man as well as a shrewd and daring warrior and leader, a seer, a prophet, a sorcerer, a tremendous personality among all the tribes of the "Western Waters," who followed and feared him as something uncanny, supernatural—a human dynamo driven by a ceaseless malevolence.

A white trader, who lived mostly in the Chickamaugan towns and whose half-breed son Sevier had saved from hanging, had smuggled a warning into Watauga, thus giving the settlers a few hours or perhaps a day—according to the amount of ceremonial the Indians would go through before starting—in which to rush their families into the fort.

Snaking his way under wagons, and behind tents . . .

(See page 24)

His note said that only that morning Dragging Canoe had come to his house and stopped him in his preparations for a trip into Watauga to buy goods, saying that the Indians doubted his good faith and would not allow him to leave; if he started, men would be sent "to follow him but not to bring him back!" Dragging Canoe had painted his face with black to deliver this message. "And now," said the trader's note, "every young fellow's face in the Indian towns is painted black." Black was the war paint. The red warriors would not wipe it from their faces until they had killed.

Andy also had news to tell, and, what with telling it and learning the plan of defense, it was some time before he and Tuleko could ride on to the MacPhail and Sevier homesteads on the Nolichucky. He found his father and brothers making all haste in dragging out their more valuable belongings and piling them into the wagon where his mother already sat holding the reins. She cried out sharply with joy when she saw her oldest son come safely from battle.

"Where's Rob Roy?" Andy asked, not seeing them.

"Over at Sevier's," he was told. One of the older boys was about to fetch them.

"We'll do that," Andy said, "ye should start for the fort. Tuleko an' me, we'll bring Roy Roy in wi' Sevier's wife an' bairns."

The loading and start were accomplished more quickly with the two scouts' help; but it was sun-

down before Andy and Tuleko turned their horses' heads toward Nolichucky Jack's.

"Tak' care o' yersel', my laddie," his mother called after him, as Duncan started the team.

"Oh, ay," he answered cheerily. He was glad to hear from Duncan that a messenger had been sent to meet the returning conquerors in the mountains. Sevier and his hardiest men would ride like mad. They might be looked for any time now.

It was characteristic of these settlers that they made their preparations for safety swiftly and quietly, without panic. None knew the horror of the menace hanging over them better than they. The fear of Indian raids was a cloud that shadowed the frontier home continually. Even now, as Andy knew, red warriors might be lying in ambush about them watching the wagon start on its way. At any moment they might burst from the words, murder his whole family and fire the cabin. It was a question whether he and Tuleko would reach Sevier's place at all; and, if they did, they might find there indescribable scenes of horror. The Wataugan settlers, familiar with the Indian mind, were putting their hope in the red man's leisurely and ceremonial way of taking the warpath. There were certain rites which the warriors must perform. There were fasts, prayers, and purifications in the sacred house of the war council. These generally lasted three days and nights. During that time the warriors held no converse with their families. The women's part was to stand outside the door from sunset to dawn,

chanting. There would be speeches in which one by one the old men would recount the glorious past of the red man, before the palefaces came to build homes and drive away the wild game which was the Indian's food. The war belt of colored wampum would be passed from hand to hand, each warrior, as he touched it, rising and singing the war song. And there would be a thundering, hissing outburst of the demoniacal oratory of Dragging Canoe. How much of this had already taken place before the trader could send out his messenger the Wataugans did not know. But the fact that sunset was already painting the valley with shadows gave them hope that the attack would not come until the next day. They knew that Indians did not often attack at night. The favorite hour was dawn. The warriors generally gathered in the woods during the night, as nearly as possible surrounding the settlement without giving a hint of their presence, and then rushed, yelling, upon it in the first light. Since no Indians had yet been seen there was a chance that all the women and children would be safe in the fort before the raid began. But if spies had been watching to-day and had reported to Dragging Canoe that the Wataugans were making ready to protect themselves, the attack would come that night —perhaps within the hour, perhaps within ten minutes! Not only were Sevier's wife and children in peril, Andy realized, keenly anxious, as he rode at top speed, but "our wee Rob Roy, too."

Bonnie Kate, as all the frontier folk lovingly

called Sevier's beautiful wife, was as hearty and smiling in her welcome of Andy and Tuleko as if they were her guests at another barbecue.

"What of Jack and the boy?" she asked quickly. If she feared that harm had befallen her husband or her stepson at King's Mountain no trace of anxiety showed on her face. Bonnie Kate would challenge peril, grief, or death with the same brave smile.

"Comin' along safe an' sound," Andy answered. "Where's Rob Roy?"

"With the children in the kitchen. We're just about starting."

But Rob Roy were not in the kitchen, when Tuleko went to call the children and tell them that Mrs. Sevier was ready to go. They had taken a bucket and gone down to the river, said the Sevier children.

"We told them not to. But you know Rob Roy!"

At that moment there was a sound of hoofs in the clearing. Jimmy Breed dashed through the dusk to his cabin and leaped from his horse. In another moment a spark of light showed through his window.

"You go on at once, Mrs. Sevier," said Andy. "Tuleko an' me, we'll bring Rob Roy—an' Jimmy. Ye've got two lads there wi' rifles. An' we'll catch up wi' ye." Andy did not want Jimmy to go with the wagon as a guard, knowing what he did about him. The team, heads down, made for the road at a gallop. Andy rushed into the clearing after

Tuleko, who was already on the search for the twins.

Now the twins had heard Tuleko calling them. They also now heard Andy. But they were much too busy to answer. In fact, they had no breath to spare with which to give a "good evening" to their brother. They were panting hard, with their tongues between their teeth, as they dug and scraped in the river sand for the hidden gold. It was the most natural thing in the world for them to be doing. They had seen Mrs. Sevier pack into the wagon all her most valued possessions, leaving behind only what seemed worthless by comparison. And they knew how Old One-Eye felt about that particular gold. In silence, with blank faces, they had listened while all Watauga talked of it and lamented its loss. Oh, no, Rob Roy would not depart for the fort leaving *their* gold in the bottom of a barbecue pit by the Nolichucky. "Nay, laddie!"

It was good luck for Sevier and for all Watauga that Rob Roy struggled with mother earth for the gold on the river shore as the twilight shadows fell. Because they appeared to be two little boys playing at mud pies or something of the sort—two happy little boys whose parents left them out at play because they feared no danger for them. Four of Dragging Canoe's scouts arrived in the brush fringe of the forest on the opposite shore about the time when the wagon drove off. Seeing the wagon go, they suspected that the Wataugans knew of the

planned raid. But when they saw the twins apparently playing in the sand by themselves their suspicions vanished. Instead of racing back to give information to their chief, who was marching up with his braves from the Tennessee, they lay behind some bushes and watched. The red-skinned army would be along at about the hour of moonrise. It was Dragging Canoe's intention to lie in the woods overnight and, at dawn, rush upon the settlement. First he would destroy the Sevier household; for, quite rightly, he considered John Sevier the strongest white man in Tennessee and therefore the most dangerous foe of the red men. He admired Sevier as much as he hated him. Therefore he meant to save two of Sevier's younger sons and bring them up among the Chickamaugans so that their strong and brave blood might mingle with that of the tribe. He had also given orders that Silent Scot and Runner-on-the-Wind were not to be killed nor scalped but to be captured alive and, if possible, unhurt. He intended to adopt them as his sons in the place of his own two brave boys who had been killed in a previous war. He had not decided which one he would choose to be chief after his death, but rather inclined toward Andy. He meant to kill the rest of the MacPhail family, including the twins, and to burn every homestead in Watauga.

Unaware of the honors prepared for him as a red chieftain, Andy was running about calling Rob Roy through the forest fringe. He saw Tuleko hovering at Jimmy Breed's door and ran softly up to

him. Together the two scouts looked in for a moment at Jimmy Breed on the floor poking into a gaping hole under the boards by the light of a flickering candle. Then they saw him spring up and heard him cursing. He turned and saw them. At that moment Rob Roy, who had been struggling up the bank with their kettle of gold, appeared over the edge and came staggering and panting across the strip of clearing.

"What have ye got there?" Andy shouted. At sight of them Tuleko had darted to meet them; and now he answered:

"Tom gold."

Jimmy rushed past Andy, swearing, and grabbed the bucket, knocking the twins aside for a moment. Only for a moment! The next instant Rob Roy recovered their balance and leaped at the bucket, seizing it firmly wherever they could grasp the rim. Jimmy swung off and raised his rifle, meanwhile whirling out of Tuleko's reach.

"Call off them brats or I'll shoot one of 'em," he yelled to Andy, who was close on them now. "You touch me," he added furiously to Tuleko, who was crouching for a spring, "an' I'll kill 'em both."

Jimmy had his rifle trained on the twins, who were now sitting on the bucket where he had dropped it to bring his gun into play. Rob sat on the gold, and Roy on top of Rob.

"Come here, Rob Roy," Andy called. He had his gun, but he knew that before he could aim at Jimmy, the latter would shoot. "Take care, Tuleko,"

he warned, fearing that the Runner might take chances on a leap to spoil Breed's aim.

"Don't move, you Indian!" Jimmy hissed at Tuleko.

"Come here, Rob Roy," Andy repeated.

"Na, na," said Rob Roy, and did not budge.

Now time was pressing for Jimmy Breed, because he knew that Sevier and his men were not so far behind him. He had to get the gold and make off before they arrived. So, still pointing his rifle at the twins, he darted at them and threw them off the bucket. Before Andy could fire, he had the bucket in his hand and little Roy tucked under his arm. He backed off toward his horse, Sevier's beautiful racer, Starlight, and shouted:

"Shoot, an' kill your own brother!"

In another moment he had dashed into the forest.

"You stay. Take care Rob. I go," Tuleko cried to Andy and sped after Starlight.

The Indian scouts hidden on the opposite bank did not know what to make of this scene; but they felt sure that white men would not quarrel if they knew that an Indian raid was imminent.

"They know nothing," one muttered.

"It is true," said another, "they know nothing. At dawn we will surprise them all."

"Still if the man who has the child on his horse rides too far he may come on some of our warriors. And if he should escape from them and return to give the alarm——"

The hint was enough. Two braves immediately

started off in the direction which Jimmy was taking, intending to cross at the ford two miles down and kill Jimmy Breed. The others watched Andy carry Rob into the house.

Tuleko also was making for the ford. He knew every inch of the country for miles and therefore he knew just where Starlight could travel and where he couldn't. Besides he had already guessed Jimmy's intention; because he had seen other Wataugan bad men light out for the Chickamaugan towns. So instead of trying to follow Jimmy directly along the trail that ran through the woods some yards back from the bank, he made a short cut down to the stream's edge and raced along the sand under cover of the dusk and the overhanging brush. He was certain that Jimmy would attempt to cross at the ford and take the traders' trail on the other shore for the cave towns of Dragging Canoe, the last refuge of the white robbers and assassins whom honest Wataugans hounded from the settlement.

Sinuous and silent as a serpent curving swiftly through grass, Tuleko wound along the brush-hung shore to the ford. Here the trail from the bank dipped down sharply between clumps of laurel. Tuleko crouched under a bush in an inky patch of shadow. He put his rifle aside and drew his knife. The rifle would be of no use to him in his assault on Jimmy, riding at Starlight's full speed with little Roy in his arms. He would have to leap upon the horse and run his blade through Jimmy's throat. He had no doubt of being able to do it. He had

often leaped to the bare back of Ahyuni. In fact, that was about the only way to catch Ahyuni, who always started, head down, full tilt, round the paddock as soon as he glimpsed the halter. For Tuleko it would be no trick at all to land on Starlight, with saddle, bridle, and rider to grasp hold of as he jumped. And he would have Jimmy at his mercy because he would take him utterly by surprise—and Jimmy's wits were very slow in getting to work after a surprise.

Presently, as he crouched there, waiting, Tuleko himself had a surprise; but fortunately *his* wits were not slow in getting to work. He heard two voices at the other side of the narrow stream. The few words he caught were in Cherokee, and he guessed at once that the speakers were Dragging Canoe's scouts because he knew that there were a number of Cherokees among the Chickamaugans. Dragging Canoe, himself, had been a Cherokee chief in the days of his semi-respectability, some years before. Tuleko had acquired a good working knowledge of the Cherokee tongue during his years of association with the Cherokees who frequently visited Watauga in seasons of peace. Piecing together what he heard with his knowledge of an Indian scout's methods, he was convinced that the two Indians were, like himself, waiting for Jimmy Breed. While he was willing enough that they should kill Jimmy and save him the trouble, he realized that the case of little Roy forbade him to "take things so easy!" He could not let the Indians get Roy. He was cast-

ing about in his mind for a plan when he saw one Indian crossing. At once he divined that they had decided to let Jimmy reach the middle of the stream and then attack him from the front and the rear at the same time. He crouched lower in the blackness of the shadows.

On came the Chickamaugan scout, taking no special care to move noiselessly, as the last thing in the world he suspected was the presence of a foe in the dark brush of the shore ahead of him. He reached the sand and immediately selected the best hiding place—the one occupied by Tuleko!

A hand closed his lips as a knife went through his heart; and, in that black density of laurel shades, he died without a sound. Tuleko lowered his victim's body silently to the sod. A moment later he heard the thudding of Starlight's hoofs.

The Runner guessed that the Indian scout would not fire in the darkness from the opposite shore for fear of killing or injuring the horse, which would be a valuable addition to the Chickamaugan "cavalry." He would rush in and shoot at close range as soon as Tuleko, whom he would suppose to be his Indian friend, stopped Jimmy's race. He would not care whether his shot killed or injured little Roy. Therefore to save Roy had become the main feature of this dangerous business, to Tuleko. He resolved to make the one effort of wresting Roy away from Jimmy and then let the yellow traitor ride on upon the muzzle of the Cherokee's rifle. Afterward? Well, he had already attended to the

other Indian. He could probably take care of this one! The Runner was no Quaker this night. He was what, after all, he had been born to be; namely, the savage son of a savage race, a Delaware brave at war. And, since in battle the Indian warriors always first protected their women and children, in caring first for little Roy, Tuleko was showing himself a worthy son of his people.

It was very dark on the steep bank slope, and Jimmy Breed slowed his mount in the descent. Then, not suspecting any danger, he stopped at the edge of the river to let Starlight drink. Creeping noiselessly alongside, Tuleko noted that Roy was tied now by the halter round Jimmy's waist. The bucket had disappeared. He guessed that the gold was in the saddlebags.

The Runner sprang. He knocked the rifle from under Jimmy's arm into the stream, and seized his wrist so that he could not draw his knife. While Starlight plunged madly, he slashed the halter and pulled little Roy off the horse. Then he sprang back. After one more plunge and rear Starlight bolted across the ford.

Tuleko darted back into the shadows and put Roy down on the ground, ordering him not to speak nor move. True to his MacPhail blood and his frontier training, this small half of the Scalpin' Scot had not uttered a sound although he had instantly recognized his dear Tuleko. Half screened, just in front of the child, the Runner watched what happened on the opposite shore. There was a blaze

and a bang as the Indian fired at the oncoming rider—and missed. Starlight and Jimmy dashed into the woods, with Old Tom's gold still in the saddlebags. Tuleko, inwardly cursing the Indian for not having finished Jimmy Breed, waited. If he kept still, the Indian would certainly come over to see what was the matter with his brother scout. Presently the Chickamaugan crossed. He called in low tones:

"Where are you, Black Feather?"

Tuleko grunted. He could have replied in Cherokee, but did not risk it because he feared that the Chickamaugan would realize at once that the words, however correct, were not spoken in Black Feather's voice.

"Have you killed the child yet?" the Indian said, coming on in the direction of the grunt. "I want his scalp, because it has red hair. Dragging Canoe promised me the first red-haired scalp."

Tuleko grunted again. Squatting in the blackness, his limbs poised for the spring, he waited till the Indian found him and bent over him.

"Give me the scalp, Black Feather."

Then the thing Tuleko had planned happened with that overwhelming swiftness which was characteristic of the Runner's methods whether in friendly sport, on the hunt, or in war. The full force of his leap drove the knife through the Indian's throat. For a few moments Tuleko busied himself over the two bodies lying in that black patch of shore. Then he collected the two rifles, powderhorns, shot

pouches, and tomahawks, and also picked Jimmy's rifle out of the shallow water where it had fallen. With his own, they made four guns, which would not lack for men to fire them in the battle next day. Lastly he crouched and ordered little Roy to swing up on his back. He climbed the bank and ran homeward along the horse trail which Jimmy had so recently traversed. He was too heavily laden to sneak back along the river's edge the way he had come. Besides, he thought it likely that a few other Indians were lying in the brush on the farther bank. If so, they would have heard the one shot fired and would be very much on the alert. No doubt some of them were now hurrying to the ford to learn if the first two scouts had succeeded in killing Jimmy Breed—and in getting a red-haired scalp from the MacPhail family! Pretty soon they would find the two bodies under the laurels. What, then? Well, they might rush off to tell their chief, or they might decide to follow and try to kill him so that he could not give the settlement news of their presence. It was expedient for him to reach Sevier's home as quickly as possible.

An hour later, perhaps, Tuleko emerged from the forest fringe upon the edge of Sevier's clearing. It was a place of subdued clamor. Lanterns swung about through the dark. Horses pawed and neighed and munched the hay thrown by the armful under their noses. There was the sound of men's voices in rapid consultation, and the clinking noise of rifles being cleaned and reloaded. The Wataugan army

from King's Mountain had arrived home and, under Sevier's instructions, was making preparations to march immediately into a forest ambush and take Dragging Canoe by surprise when he attempted to rush in to attack the settlement at daybreak. Old Shark sat on the porch with Rob on his knee.

Andy was the first to espy Tuleko, probably because he was watching so anxiously for him. In the spattered flare of the lanterns he saw first the gleam of rifle muzzles, then the Runner's bent head and lastly a flicker of ruddy curls.

"Tuleko's got Roy! Tuleko's got Roy!" he shouted and rushed to meet his friend.

"Take guns," Tuleko grunted, letting them drop, as Andy quickly laid hands on them. "I fetch Roy." He lifted Roy from his back to his shoulder and holding him there securely with his left hand, drew himself erect, grasped his knife in his other hand, and strode toward Sevier like the proud and warlike conqueror he was.

"Well done, Runner!" Sevier cried. He caught Roy away from the Indian boy and held him a moment in his own arms before he set him on Old One-Eye's other knee opposite Rob. The two halves of the Scalpin' Scot eyed each other solemnly for a moment; then, in true Scotch fashion, Rob said:

"I'm verra pleased to see ye again, Roy."

"Oh, ay," said Roy, as coolly. "Ye're lookin' well, Rob." Then, as unemotionally, they shook hands.

"Tuleko, we're off to war again," Andy said ex-

citedly, breaking in on the crowd's questions about what had happened to the traitor, Jimmy Breed, and Old Tom's gold.

"Yes, Runner," Sevier added jovially, "if you're as quick at dawn as you were in the dusk to-night, who knows? Maybe you'll take the first scalp."

That was just one of Nolichucky Jack's rough jokes, of course. All the white men under him knew his repugnance to scalping. Only Tuleko didn't; simply because Tuleko, not having a civilized man's viewpoint, could not see anything the least objectionable in that ancient and honorable Indian custom.

At Sevier's words his breast heaved, his eyes flashed, he lifted his head even more proudly. With a swift gesture he seized a torch from a bystander's hand and swung it low so that its blaze played over his magnificent copper-colored body and legs.

"Already Tuleko take two first scalp. Tuleko take Breed scalp to-morrow maybe, make present for Jack."

Then they all saw the two Chickamaugan scalps dangling from the Runner's belt!

CHAPTER VII

CHIEF DRAGGING CANOE'S WAR

THE moon, riding high at midnight, shone down on weird and wild scenes. On Sevier's cleared land, stretching some acres about the house, slept the returned army from King's Mountain, while sentinels kept watch and tended the fires. The Wataugans, men and horses, were to have only a brief rest. When the moon declined, they would be pushing eastward several miles through the forest to ambush the oncoming warriors of Dragging Canoe. Well screened by the thick leafage, at a point where the trail from the caves along the Tennessee took a steep slant upward, they would spread out in the "half-moon" formation which Sevier had learned from the red men in his earliest battles with them and which he had used ever since so much more cleverly—and suddenly—that he had never been worsted in an Indian war. The idea was a very simple one. The men spread out, more in the form of a crescent really than a half-moon, and waited for the enemy as nearly as they could gauge in a position which would bring the foe against their center. The men of the center would begin a hot skirmishing and retreat, drawing all the enemy troops after them. Then the men composing the

two horns of the crescent, who had remained under cover, not firing, would swing together at the foe's back, bringing rifles and tomahawks into play. The trapped Indians were at a disadvantage both because of their situation within the circle and because of the mental effect it had on them. The red men, it seems, could not fight intelligently when surrounded. They usually lost their heads and, instead of trying to conquer, only strove desperately to cut a way through and escape. "Fight strong and run away quick," was an Indian saying; and the quick getaway was not considered as cowardice but as good sense! Sevier, therefore, who knew just about what Dragging Canoe's tactics would be, was preparing to do the trick himself and do it first.

While Nolichucky Jack and his Wataugans took their brief sleep, Dragging Canoe and his Chickamaugans lay in camp only a few miles to the west. And, between the two forces, the silence of the forest under the spell of the night was broken here and there by the passage of Starlight and Jimmy Breed making for the Chickamaugan towns, and by the quieter footfalls of the two Indian spies who had discovered the scalped bodies of their comrades —left as gruesome souvenirs for them by Tuleko— and were hastening with the news to Dragging Canoe. Sometimes the full glow of the moon picked them out, as well as Jimmy Breed, as they crossed an open space. But not the moon nor dry, fallen leaves betrayed another man who also ran through the forest toward the lair of Dragging Canoe. Run-

ner-on-the-Wind was a silent and invisible traveler when on such important business as this. It was his task to find out whether Dragging Canoe would attack that night or wait till dawn.

A tinge of red in the silver light lying over a small, narrow gulch guided him to the Chickamaugan camp at last. From the overhanging branch of a maple, some forty feet above the unsuspecting Indians, the Runner watched an interesting scene. An Indian held Starlight by the bridle. Jimmy Breed was on the ground in the grip of two other savages who were deterred from killing him by several white men in war paint and feathers. Tuleko recognized among them Hank Davy, the ruffianly traitor who had slipped away with Jimmy on the march to King's Mountain and joined Ferguson. This was proof enough, Tuleko thought, that Hank's long absences from Watauga, supposedly on "hunting" trips, had been excursions of robbery and murder in the company of the Chickamaugans.

As Tuleko watched, a tall Indian glided swiftly out of the shadows beyond the fire's circle. Silence fell on the group immediately. Indians and renegade white men alike seemed rather to shrink back instinctively than merely to stand aside with respect to make passage for Dragging Canoe. No doubt even to the bad "whites," whose ignorance made them no less superstitious than the Indians, this weird man seemed to have been marked by supernatural influences with his tall, very lean body, where the hard muscles stood out like cords, his abnor-

mally long arms and hands, the peculiar twisting stoop of his shoulders and of his long, thin neck which thrust his head forward like a snake's poised to strike, and his small, restless, glittering eyes. The hideous designs of the black war paint on his face detracted nothing from the ugliness with which nature had dowered Dragging Canoe. On seeing him, Jimmy began to pour out a stream of pleas for mercy, and of assertions regarding his friendship for the Chickamaugans. Jimmy had heard enough tales of burnings and other tortures inflicted by this band on stray white men to make him very earnest in his prayers. Hank Davy added arguments of his own. From what Tuleko could catch of the conversation when their voices rose he judged that Jimmy was explaining that he had come to join Dragging Canoe because of his admiration for that "great chief" and also because he scorned white men, especially Wataugans, and all their ways. Jimmy, to hear him tell it, had been shamefully wronged by the Wataugans, particularly by Sevier, and craved revenge. In order to get it, he offered to show Dragging Canoe a quick, short trail to Sevier's house. Indeed, he embarked on a sea of promises; it was truly marvelous what favors and services Jimmy Breed would do for his new "red brothers" if they would only spare his life. Hank indorsed him nobly. But Dragging Canoe was not impressed. He was overly suspicious of white men at all times; and now he believed, not unnaturally, that Jimmy was a spy sent out by Sevier. Abruptly he ordered

him to be bound and burned. Then Jimmy in desperation played his last card. He offered the gold in Starlight's saddlebags, declaring that he had brought it as a present to the great chief. If the Indians would unbind him and let him go to his horse he would soon show all of them the gold. At that the chief sneered venomously.

"He thinks I am a fool," he said, in his own language, to his warriors, "to let him jump on his horse and run off, perhaps; or get some weapon from his saddlebags!"

Jimmy continued to protest so vehemently, however, that Dragging Canoe presently ordered two Indians to examine the bags. And there, of course, they found Old Shark's gold coins.

"It is magic," said the chief, as he watched the bits of clinking yellow metal stream out on the ground. "Yes, it is one of the two magics that make white men dangerous and strong. The other is rum." He turned again to Hank Davy, who had been acting as interpreter, and asked whose gold it was and how Jimmy had come into possession of such strong magic. Even Jimmy Breed's slow wits had to work a little faster after a hint like that. Magic! There was the word, probably the only word, that would influence a crafty and superstitious old conjurer like Dragging Canoe. So Jimmy told of the one-eyed man from the far-off great water who had brought the gold and hidden it in the high mountain where Spirits of the Dead guarded it; and how Sevier had stolen it and brought it to

Watauga, where it had given him all his power and success until he had offended Jimmy Breed, whereupon the Spirits of the Dead, who were old friends of Jimmy's, of course, had told Jimmy to bring the gold to the great and wise chief, Dragging Canoe, because it was purposed that Dragging Canoe should wipe out Watauga and give the red men back their old hunting grounds—but, of course, only if he saved the life of Jimmy Breed, beloved of the spirits! As Tuleko listened to this nonsense and saw how easily the chief and the Chickamaugans believed it, he felt more disgusted than ever with the Indian scout who had let Jimmy escape at the ford. However, he had the compensating satisfaction of remembering what had happened to that same Indian scout immediately afterward!

Poor Old One-Eye's gold was gone for good now; and Jimmy Breed had saved his own worthless life again—for a while. Crouched there in the maple boughs, in acute discomfort, in disgust, and, let it be remembered, in grave peril also, Tuleko made a solemn vow, not to the God of the Quakers who was his winter deity, but to the red gods of the Delawares who presided over the war trail. And the vow had not a little to do with the mat of black hair which was adorning the head of the cowardly and treacherous Mr. Breed, late of Watauga.

"If the spirits of the gold make me master of the white men, then you shall be my son, and chief after me," Dragging Canoe said to Jimmy. "And when at dawn we attack Watauga, you shall kill

Sevier's youngest child and bring me its scalp. Then I shall know that you are no longer a white man."

When Hank Davy had translated this speech, Jimmy Breed made the promise that was demanded of him.

"I had thought to save the Silent Scot and the Runner to be my sons," the chief went on, "but now I do not need them. So let them also be killed."

"Let all white men be killed," his warriors chanted.

The chief now commanded two of the braves to paint Jimmy's face and to stick feathers in his hair.

"What are you going to do with the gold?" Hank asked. "It may get lost if you take it on the war-path." He was already wondering how he could steal some of it. That ought not to be difficult, he thought, because the Indians could not count it. "It would be better to let one of us—Bear's Paw, there," pointing to a young man outside the immediate circle, "or better still, myself, stay behind here to watch the gold and see that the Spirits do not get angry again and take it away. I was once a white man and I have all the white man's knowledge about gold."

But Dragging Canoe did not think this such a good idea. Then, too, he knew all he needed to know about Hank's honesty.

"No. The Spirits said plainly to my new son that he must give the gold to me, for the conquest of the white men. Therefore I will now take it and hide it in a place no one else shall know. If

the Spirits have lied and the great Dragging Canoe is killed in the battle, then the gold is evil magic; and it is best that no Chickamaugan shall ever see it again. If the Spirits have spoken truly and I am victorious, killing all the white men with their women and children and burning all the homes so that the forest may grow again and the deer come back. then the gold is good magic; and when we return I will dig it up and carry it to our towns."

He peered forward into Jimmy Breed's face so suddenly, with a change of expression, suspicious, fanatical, almost inhuman in the capacity for malevolence which it revealed, that Jimmy involuntarily started back. The chief tapped Jimmy's breast with his crooked forefinger.

"It may be that this man has lied and wishes to lead us into a trap. We will know if my four scouts come back and tell me that the white men are warned and armed. They will tell us why this man left Watauga. But, if all is well, they will not come back, but join us on the march. I go now to hide the gold. In one hour or a little more I will return. We will not march till nearly dawn. You may sleep. But you," pointing to Hank Davy, "and you—and you"—he designated several others among the renegade white men—"shall watch over my new son. If he runs awav I will kill all of vou."

"We are not white men. We are Chickamaugans," Hank declared. And the others echoed him vociferously, "We are Chickamaugans!"

In silence Dragging Canoe gathered up the gold

in a blanket and securely tied the ends. Then he slung the bundle over his shoulder and glided away into the shadows toward the other side of the gulch. Presently his voice came back to the silent group which strained its eyes after him uselessly:

"I have seen white skin on your bodies. Sometimes I think *only flames* can change the color of white skin."

There was even a deeper silence after this pleasant hint. No one moved nor spoke for about ten minutes. Tuleko, from his maple perch, was trying to discover the chief's moving figure in the blackness across the gulch. Quite naturally, the Runner wanted very much to know which way Old Shark's gold was going. Some moments after the white men below him had come out of the trance into which the chief's parting words had cast them and had begun whispering together, Tuleko glimpsed Dragging Canoe on the moonlit rim of the far side of the gully; then he could see him no longer. From the pose of his figure for those few seconds in the moonlight, Tuleko judged that Dragging Canoe had taken a northwesterly direction; but, of course, he realized that the wily chief might have purposely tried to deceive the white men whom he would suspect of watching him.

Tuleko knew now the principal fact which he had come to learn; namely, that Dragging Canoe did not intend to march till just before dawn. But, of course, there was no telling what the chief would decide upon after the two scouts came in with their

report of the episode at the ford. Undoubtedly, thought Tuleko, they had found the scalped corpses of their two comrades, and whom could they blame but Jimmy Breed, since they had seen no one else there? It was probable, Tuleko cogitated joyfully, that they would accuse Jimmy of having secreted the child somewhere and also of having killed the two Indians; and when Dragging Canoe heard *that,* well, Jimmy Breed would probably spend the rest of the night feeding the camp fire as fuel! He wished, regretfully, that he had the time to stay and witness the just punishment of Jimmy Breed, but he realized that he ought to be on his way home with his information. He must wait only until sleep fell on the camp below; then he could climb down out of the maple without the risk of being heard.

Some time later he was just about to descend when the sound of voices reached him. Three white men were crawling up the bank toward his tree. They were Jimmy Breed, Hank Davy, and another ex-Wataugan named Hans Kaffer. It soon appeared that they were hiding under the maple for an important conference; and their low-toned conversation, perfectly audible to him, interested Tuleko very much.

"Here's the plan, Hans," said Hank Davy. "Dragging Canoe is sure to leave some traces of his trail the way he's gone with the gold, an' any good scout, like one of us three, can find 'em. We get the gold an' divide it equal an' cross the moun-

tains somewheres into the Back Country an' set up in some town where we can live like gen'lemen."

"Dragging Canoe'll kill us," Hans Kaffer protested.

"Don't give him a chance! If Sevier's men don't kill him to-morrow, we will. We stick close to him in the battle; an' when the firin's thick we shoot him. That's easy. There ain't nothin' easier."

Hans grunted doubtfully; but evidently he was enough impressed to want to hear the rest of the plot, for he said: "Go on. What's next?"

"Them scouts. They is likely to get back any time now. Jimmy says he only saw two when they tried to stop him, but we know the chief sent four. Seems Jimmy, bein' a brave fellow, put up an awful fight an' mebbe killed one of 'em. An', anyway, it's too risky to let them scouts get back here an' talk to the chief, coz we don't know what he'll do, 'ceptin' that he's likely to set his braves on to us an' kill every white man in the band. You've always got to remember that Dragging Canoe's a mad dog when it comes to white men. He hates 'em—*hates* 'em. We jus' can't take the chances of lettin' them scouts come home."

"We're only three men. We can't finish off four," the practical Hans demurred.

"Yes, we can. We go along the trail an' meet 'em. They know we're friends of theirs—pooh! it's easy."

They discussed the matter for a few minutes,

chiefly to decide just where they would lie in wait for the unsuspecting scouts. The best place, Hank said, was about a mile and a half away; because they could easily hide the bodies there. There must be no shooting, of course, to rouse and alarm the camp. They would use the tomahawk.

They set off at a rapid pace, little guessing that the silent Runner-on-the-Wind followed immediately in their wake. Tuleko had no intention of interfering with their enterprise, nor of molesting them; but he thought it important to know what happened. If the scouts escaped from the assassins and reached the camp, Dragging Canoe would probably rush down on Watauga at once instead of waiting for dawn. That would be bad for Sevier and his friends. Tuleko hoped that the three white-skinned villains would not fail! It was interesting also to know that the Wataugans need not make any special effort to kill the Chickamaugan chief. Yes, he reflected contentedly, Old One-Eye's gold was doing more good to Watauga where it was than if it had remained safely at home!

The pleasant tenor of his thoughts was diverted by the sound of voices and the swishing of leaves in the thick darkness of the coppice some yards ahead of him. This was evidently the desired meeting place and he judged by the sounds that the three white men and the unsuspecting scouts were even at that moment exchanging greetings. So dense was the shade that, in spite of his abnormally keen sight, he could see nothing. He realized now why Hank

had chosen this place—because of an old bear or wolf pit which would hide the bodies safely from the marching red men in the morning. So that he might hear without being heard, Tuleko made a detour, pausing at last when he had passed the unseen group.

"The chief sent us to look for you," he heard Hank say in Cherokee. "Where are the others?"

"Dead," the Indian replied. "A white man on a horse killed and scalped both of them and rode away. We heard a shot and we ran to the ford and found their bodies."

He had innocently told the three bad whites enough to seal his fate and his companion's there and then. Tuleko heard a guttural exclamation of surprise and alarm, then the swishing of branches as if wild animals, lured by the smell of blood, had leaped upon each other. Almost instantly followed a sound he knew well, the stroke of a tomahawk through a skull, then the heavier swish-sh of a body falling, then that tomahawk stroke a second time. Several minutes later he heard Jimmy say,

"Where's the pit?"

There was no need to wait longer. The Runner made his way among the bushes silently and carefully till he was sure that he was out of hearing; then he dashed for home. The Wataugans were already bestirring themselves when he arrived; and Andy, of course, was on the lookout for him.

"Tuleko!" Silent Scot caught his friend round the shoulders in one of the sudden, violent bear hugs

which these two usually unemotional scouts reserved for each other.

"Where Jack?" Tuleko asked.

"Come on. He's over there by the house wi' John and Jonathan Tipton." They crossed the clearing hastily to Sevier's group.

The two Tipton brothers, of whom John was the elder, stood listening to Sevier; but evidently they were not agreeing with him in his outline of the campaign. John Tipton raised several objections, which Jonathan echoed. Andy frowned thoughtfully as he listened. He was a keen, intuitive lad and quickly sensitive to any undercurrents of feeling against his beloved Nolichucky Jack. Indeed, Andy made it a point to gauge men's secret attitude toward Jack because it seemed to him that Sevier was strangely and even dangerously indifferent about it. Sevier never took notice, apparently, of anything but action. And he even ignored overt acts of treachery—as in the case of Jimmy Breed—as long as he could. Andy said in Delaware to Tuleko:

"Those two Tiptons are jealous of Jack. Some day they'll make trouble."

"Maybe they'll get killed to-day by the Chickamaugans," Tuleko suggested hopefully. Having saved little Roy, killed and scalped two foes, and returned again with good news about the enemy's movements, the Runner was feeling very optimistic. In a few words he told Sevier the fact of most

importance to him; namely, that the Chickamaugans would not break camp until just about dawn.

"Then my forecast was correct, and we will follow my plan," Sevier said vigorously. "It is quick march for us, boys. It lacks little more than an hour of dawn. We'll wait for Dragging Canoe about two miles yonder. I'll take the center and coax them in on me to fight. We'll put Andy, Tuleko, and Burke at the right horn. And we can't do better than let Jonathan Tipton command the left. When you hear my war whoop, swing in left and right and close the circle. I'm counting on you not to let even one of those red devils break through and escape."

Perhaps this was Sevier's way of allaying jealousy. He had given the younger Tipton a post as important as his own, if somewhat less dangerous. Andy frowned over that, too, in his slow, concentrated, meditative fashion.

"And remember, boys, that in this house, here, the Admiral will be alone with the Scalpin' Scot. Keep an eye out for Jimmy Breed, who has shown himself to-night to be worse than any Indian. See to it that no man of the Chickamaugans, red or white, gets through our line to do any mischief to an old man and two little children."

"Never fear for me, my hearty," Old Shark bellowed. "My cutlass is bright an' sharp; an' I've still a strong arm to swing it an' one good, keen eye to see where to hack with it. Oh, my lads, this minds

me o' my happy days upon the sea, when the decks ran red like wine!"

"That's the spirit, Admiral!" Sevier laughed and clapped the old pirate on the shoulder.

"I wish the Tiptons were at home sick abed wi' the measles," Andy muttered to himself as they all took up the march. "I'd feel safer. Sulky, jealous de'ils, baith o' them; an' all because Jack made a hero o' himself at King's Mountain!"

The Wataugans halted about fifty yards from the ford; then, under Sevier's orders, the two horns of the "half-moon" lengthened out and curved through the forest toward the river. The left "horn" lay farthest east, nearest to the settlement, poised above that hanging, snaking trail along the face of the bank by which Tuleko had reached the ford at dusk to waylay Jimmy and Roy. Sevier cautioned Jonathan Tipton again about swift and sure action when the signal sounded, pointing out the perils of that position. Not only must Tipton swing his men quickly into the circle to prevent the Indians from turning and running back across the ford, but also to prevent any of them from slipping down on to that trail under the cliffs—the trail that led to the Sevier and MacPhail homesteads.

"If only three or four of them take that trail," he explained, "they can kill the Admiral and the Scalpin' Scot, set my house and barns afire, and run on and fire Andy's home and make off into the woods before we can get back to stop them. It's what Dragging Canoe himself will likely try to do, when

he sees that he hasn't surprised us and can't drive us back. That's the kind of revenge he will seek for. See that he doesn't do it, Jonathan."

It was not long before the dense blackness of the sky began to thin and take on a gray tinge. Then presently the chill, white, misty, autumn dawn filled sky, forest, and river gulch; and birds from scores of nests greeted it with restless twittering. Now that the light had come every man took note of tree, fallen log, or thick bush, which would afford him the best cover and screened himself behind it, with rifle primed and tomahawk ready. Andy's keen, farsighted eyes saw the first stirring of the woods opposite, telling that many bodies moved through the brush. He nudged Tuleko and, together, they watched the swaying of a multitude of feathers, as if all the twittering birds had curiously swarmed together and were swinging over the tops of the bushes and the long grass. Then the barrels of rifles appeared, and lastly the naked, painted bodies and the fierce faces marked with the war paint so hideously that they seemed the faces of weird demons, not human at all. As the Indians crossed the ford Tuleko noticed that Jimmy, Hank, and Hans were close beside the chief.

Believing all good Wataugans to be sound asleep in bed, Dragging Canoe drew up his red braves on the shore line and exhorted them briefly once more to kill, burn, destroy, to leave not one paleface alive nor one house log upon another. Then he grunted the order to go on. The Indians, no longer needing

to go single file or two abreast as in crossing the ford, branched out in an irregular, narrow fan shape and mounted the bank. Andy noted, with apprehension, that Dragging Canoe himself was on the far side of the fan where only Jonathan Tipton and his men could look out for him.

With nerves at strain and ears cocked for Sevier's signal, the two scouts and the sheriff saw the main body of the Chickamaugans push swiftly toward the point where Sevier was concealed. They heard yells of surprise, and shots. Then suddenly they saw Dragging Canoe leap sidewise, like a wild cat, and heard the rifle which had aimed at him fire and miss. Instantly they guessed what had happened. Instead of waiting, concealed, for Sevier's signal, Jonathan Tipton, seeing Dragging Canoe within easy range, had fired at him. Now the secret was out and the old plan of battle useless; for the Indians were thus made suddenly aware of the ambuscade. They turned all ways now to meet the Wataugans, before the latter had a chance to close in on them.

"At them, boys! Every man for himself now!" Sevier's great voice boomed out.

Some of the Indians with a few of the cowardly white men of their band rushed back across the ford, several of their number dropping on the way as Burke's sharpshooters picked them off. Tuleko, swinging his tomahawk, always his preferred weapon in war, dashed along the bank toward Tipton's detachment where he had seen the chief take a leap over the bank. He explained to Andy later that

he had not been sure at the moment whether he would kill Dragging Canoe or Jonathan Tipton; it would have depended, he thought, on which he met first! He met neither; for Tipton, instead of taking the offensive, was drawing back toward Sevier's group. Tuleko found himself in the midst of a dozen Chickamaugans, and, consequently, too busy to think. Hatchet blows, shots, yells, war whoops, the lashing of bodies through the brushwood, made a horrible bedlam of that beautiful autumn morning. The Indians fought like furies, but the white men drove them back steadily; and, in less than an hour, the red army was in flight.

Andy had fought his way close to Sevier and had cut down an Indian who was swinging his tomahawk at the back of Jack's head. So he was close enough to see and hear what passed in the brief scene between Jack and the Tiptons. Andy caught his breath and stared as Sevier wheeled upon Jonathan; it was the first time he had ever seen Nolichucky Jack in a rage.

"You fool! The jail is the proper place for you. Every white settler who comes home to find his wife and children murdered and scalped by those Chickamaugan devils can thank *you* for it. But for you we'd have smashed them. Who saw which way Dragging Canoe went?" Burke answered him.

"Tuleko saw him leap over the bank, with three men he thinks were Jimmy Breed an' some bad whites followin' after him. Tuleko's gone lookin' for them."

"Boys!" cried Sevier. "It's as I told you. Dragging Canoe is making for our homestead."

"Old Tom an' the twins!" Andy cried, turning white.

"Come on!" Sevier roared; and, following him, the Wataugans broke, like a storm through the forest, for home.

The twins! The thought of their peril gave the speed of arrows to Silent Scot's feet. He was soon far in the lead. He stopped running only when he reached the edge of Sevier's clearing and then only for an instant to take in the scene before his eyes and to decide on the best thing to do.

Hank Davy, dead, with a bullet through his temple, lay within a few yards of him. Farther off lay another man, still alive, for Andy could hear his groans. It was the man Toleko had heard the others call "Hans." To one side of the house, behind some bushes, crouched another man; the tips of his feathered headdress betrayed him. Andy did not even guess at the moment that this was Jimmy Breed; but he did know that those were not Tuleko's feathers. Where was Tuleko? For those two fallen Chickamaugans, one dead and the other probably dying, proved to him that the Runner was at least within rifle shot. He moved carefully about until he could see the door of Sevier's house. And then he gasped.

Two men, tightly clasped, one armed with a tomahawk and the other with a cutlass, struggled and swayed on the porch. It was Old One-Eye and

Dragging Canoe locked in the strife of death. Inside the house were little Rob Roy MacPhail; and the brave old Admiral did not mean to let that Indian fiend pass, even though he lost his own life in stopping him. Andy was just about to rush to Old Tom's aid, taking his chances of being shot on the way by the man hiding behind the bush, when he saw the Runner's lithe brown body hurtle through the air in a zigzag course toward the porch. Andy shifted his gaze quickly to the hidden foe and saw Jimmy Breed rise and bring up his rifle to take aim.

"Jimmy Breed, ye're a dead man!" he yelled, and sprang out. Jimmy, taken by surprise, faltered and lost his aim as he looked about for this new enemy; which is exactly what Andy had known Jimmy would do. With swift and accurate aim and all his force, Silent Scot flung his tomahawk and knocked the rifle out of Jimmy's hand. Then he swung his own to take aim; but Jimmy knew his game was up. He ducked down, grabbed his rifle, and plunged into the woods. Andy sent a shot after him, reloaded, and then ran toward the place. But Jimmy Breed had not waited for him! He was dashing through the woods as fast as he could go. Andy turned back toward the house. There he saw Captain Shark leaning against the wall with blood spurting from a gash in his hairy chest; and Dragging Canoe lying on his back with his head lolling down the steps and Old One-Eye's trusty cutlass in his throat. Badly wounded from the chief's tomahawk, the old pirate had nevertheless managed

in one last, mighty effort to swing his beloved ancient weapon with good effect, as in the days of yore when One-Eyed Shark was the holy terror of the seas. Dragging Canoe was dead. His body had dropped just as Tuleko, knife in hand, gained the steps behind him.

While the two scouts were laying Old Tom on the porch bench and binding his wound as best they could, Sevier and his men rushed up. Two of them picked up the wounded Hans and carried him indoors. Sevier himself took charge of his Admiral, speaking words of affection and admiration to him.

"Don't 'ee worry, Jack," the old man croaked cheerfully; "I'll live to die o' old age or the whooping-cough, but a pin scratch like this never bothered Old Shark." Presently he gave an eery chuckle. "Ho, ho! When Rob Roy saw him comin' 'twas all I could do to keep 'em from goin' out after him with the poker an' a stick o' firewood. They ought to be sailors—ay, ay."

Tuleko told briefly and unemotionally how he had followed the chief and the three white men, shot Hank Davy dead and wounded Hans; and how annoyed he felt that he had not killed Jimmy. He also told Sevier now about the gold, hidden none knew where. One of the men said that probably Jimmy had gone back to look for it. But, as a matter of fact, Jimmy had not gone back. He was afraid to return to the Chickamaugans without his friend Hank Davy. He feared that they believed now, perhaps, that he had been a white spy all

along. No, Jimmy Breed was on Starlight's back again, racing for the mountain pass. He would go into the Back Country of North Carolina, look up those cousins of the Biddos, and lead a safe life far from both red Chickamaugans and white Wataugans. Some day, perhaps, his chance would come to get even for all his failures, and for the loss of the gold, with John Sevier and with Andy and Tuleko. Hatred and fear boiled within him as Jimmy Breed rode into the pass whence had come Old Tom's gold in the beginning.

Two other men rode away from Sevier's that day without a word to him; the two brothers Tipton. Jonathan was angry and humiliated, but he was, after all, hardly more than an echo of his stronger brother. It was John Tipton whose face wore a look of brooding thunder, reflecting the dark mind of an ambitious, crafty, and jealous man. Dragging Canoe's war had lost one fierce enemy for Sevier and made another. And John Tipton was to prove himself an enemy not less malevolent and no more chivalrous than the dead Chickamaugan chief, and a hundred times more dangerous because more intelligent and resourceful.

"Ye did verra well, Runner; but ye shouldna ha'e come home wi'out our gold," Rob piped up reprovingly.

"Nay, ye shouldna, Runner," Roy echoed. Then he added: "Never ye mind, Rob. Some day I'll go and get yon bonnie gold." And that was a prophecy, too.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LAND OF THE FREE

To the Indian mind the Revolution which set American Patriots and British Loyalists at each other's throats, offered the long-desired opportunity to get rid of the hated palefaces once and for all—at least from the vast hunting grounds west of the Appalachians. Skirting the zones of battle, making detours of hundreds of miles, hiding by day and skulking through forests and over pastures by night, famishing in fear of firing the shot that would bring down buffalo or deer, fourteen emissaries of red tribes from north and south made their way to Chota, the principal town of the Chickamaugans. They came from the Creeks and the Choctaws in Georgia and Alabama, from the Shawanoes and the Delawares of the Ohio territory, even from the Mohawks of Hudson Valley and from some of the tribes in French Canada.

They brought with them the magnificent war belt of the Shawanoes. It was nine feet long and six inches wide and was made of purple and vermilion wampum. The Shawanoe chieftain held it in both hands and sang his war song: then he extended it to Dragging Canoe, who laid his own hand on it and sang the Chickamaugan war song. It was this

scene of which the trader's letter to Sevier had given the Wataugans timely information immediately on their return from King's Mountain. Not to be deterred from their purpose by the defeat of Dragging Canoe, the emissaries had gone on to Great Telliko, the chief town of the numerous and warlike Cherokee Nation; and there, by the romantic appeal of the war belt, the war songs, and the impassioned oratory of the Mohawk warrior, they had stirred the Cherokees to war. The chiefs of tribes who were generally foes made friends that day. They swore to act as one family of brothers against all whites.

"Shall we die, shall we die?" chanted the Mohawk. "Did not the Great Spirit create the forest where the deer run, the streams where the beaver build, and the plain where the buffalo feed for the red man? To us he gave them for life, that we might live. Now the palefaces have chased them away, and we are perishing. Seventy days have we been on our journey to come to you: we are weary and lean and hungry. Everywhere along our way we have seen homes and forts springing up like poisoned weeds across the green sod of our hunting grounds. Where once were great herds of buffalo, we have watched hundreds of white warriors preparing for war. So many now are these white warriors and their women and children that we have been obliged to travel a great way on the western side of the Ohio River, the beautiful river beloved of the Indians. Many days' journey toward the

setting sun we had to travel to avoid being seen by white men. And, even there, we crossed the fresh tracks of a great tribe of palefaces, with horses and cattle, going still farther toward the setting sun. Shall we die, brothers, shall we die? Or strike as one for our lands?"

"We will strike! We will strike!" was the cry that answered him.

And so it was that no sooner had Dragging Canoe's war ended with the death of that redoubtable fanatic himself under Old One-Eye's cutlass, than the Wataugans were on horseback again riding to meet the Cherokees. Instead of letting the Indians come down on the fort and settlement, Sevier carried to them the war they asked for! At the head of a contingent of his hardiest men on the fastest horses, and with Andy and Tuleko close on his heels, he swept through the Cherokee towns laying them waste with fire. The Indians defended their homes bravely; but, when Sevier took a number of their women and children captive, they surrendered. They were willing to make any terms demanded of them to ransom their women because they considered it the supreme disgrace to have women captured by the enemy. The treaty concluded with the poetic phrase which we find so often in the old compacts made between the white and red men: "while rivers flow and grasses grow, and sun and moon endure." If the peace was to last as long as that, namely, forever, the white men of Tennessee, as well as the red, must give some tangible evi-

dence of friendship. Very well. The Cherokees needed blankets, and gayly colored cotton cloth for their ladies' gowns, many strings of glass beads, powder, and lead—for hunting only, now, not for war—hatchets, matches, and various delicacies in the way of white men's food, like flour and sugar. And Sevier promised that these would be paid to them by the Great White Father, the Governor of North Carolina—Tennessee being still a part of North Carolina—as soon as news of the peace could be carried to him and the goods carried back. The Wataugans then went home, hoping to enjoy a little rest, and waited for the goods to arrive so that they might distribute them among the Indians, thus fulfilling their part of the compact and proving their good faith.

But the goods did not arrive. Sevier sent messengers to the Governor: and the messengers came back with vague promises but no goods. The Cherokees became impatient and suspicious. One day Old Tassel, a brave and honorable chief, rode up to Sevier's door and taunted him contemptuously with his "bad faith." The situation was critical.

"Andy," said Sevier, "I'll write no more letters. You take the Runner with you and ride over the hills and see the Governor. And when you come back, bring that pack train of goods along with you!"

"I will, never fear!" Silent Scot promised. But Andy was mistaken. When he and Tuleko returned they brought only very serious news. It appeared that the Governor and the House of Representatives

and the Senate, too, were much annoyed with the "Men by the Western Waters," as they called them in their speeches; and they were especially annoyed with John Sevier because of his habit of doing things without consulting *them.* Evidently the difficulty of consulting politicians, many miles distant across huge mountains, when savages in war paint were on the warpath and only a few miles away, did not strike the Governor and his henchmen! They were annoyed about the way in which Sevier had financed the King's Mountain campaign—borrowing government money from the land office without so much as a "by your leave, sir!" to the governor! Besides, had Sevier asked permission of the Governor, the military head of the state, to raise an army and go after Ferguson? *He had not!* Of course, every one in North Carolina, including the Governor, the House, and the Senate, was very glad that the menace of Ferguson was forever removed; and as soon as the news of the frontiersmen's victory reached them, they had passed a vote of thanks to the men by the Western Waters for their "noble patriotism and sacrifice." Yes, to be sure. And, of course, they admitted, Sevier had paid back out of his own pocket every dollar he took from the land office; so that the victory at King's Mountain, where the Wolf of the border fell, had, in reality, cost the state not one penny. However, all that was ancient history. The point now was that these same men of Tennessee were demanding that an expensive load of goods be sent by the government to Indians who

threatened no one in the state except the frontiersmen. And the state, having been overrun by the British for so long, was poor. The treaty of peace between America and England had indeed brought peace to North Carolina, but not plenty.

All this and much more had Andy heard at the capital. His blue eyes fairly stung like rapier points, and his Scotch burr thickened twice on every "r" and hissed on every "s" with scornful rage as he repeated to Sevier, John Tipton, and a dozen other Wataugans in old Shark's shop what some of the politicians had said on the floor of the House.

"Wull ye believe it, Jack? Ah, nay, ye'll not, forr 'tiss awfu'! But I sswearr to ye, I hearrd it wi' my own earrrss."

"Keep cool, laddie," Sevier smiled and laid his hand on his shoulder. "Your speech is so Scotch with all those double r's and s's buzzing that you sound more like a beehive than a man. Take it easy —one r and one s at a time."

Andy gulped down some of his wrath, breathed hard twice, and then took up his tale in diction easier to understand.

"'Tis this I heard one of 'em say, Jack. An' he was a Senator an' kinsman o' the Governor—the feckless fule! He said: ''Tis too much is this outrageous demand frae yon men by the Western Waters for goods to give to Cherokees. 'Tis come to this,' says he (the saftie!), 'that we carefu', law-abidin' citizens are to be robbed o' our hard-earned goods to satisfy the rapacity o' yon lawless, roysterin'

crew ower the mountains. An' as to that man Sevier,' he says, 'that lawless bandit that robbed the land office, if I'd my way,' says he (the bloody rapscallion!), 'Sevier would be in jail and in irons this minute.' An' that's what he said, Jack. I'm no' lyin' to ye."

Sevier smiled, but his dark blue eyes, usually so warm and merry, were cold and hard.

"I wish I had him here—the pasty-faced, seasick landlubber!" bellowed Old Shark. *"I'd* slice him! I'd feed him to minnows, a crumb at a time. What a foul tongue to wag at Jack!"

"And we're sending, next week, tax money enough to pay for all those goods," said Duncan MacPhail.

"The redskins'll be down on us again," said Sheriff Burke.

"And rightly," Sevier replied. "We have broken faith with them."

"Ay." Duncan shook his head gravely. "For 'tis no use tryin' to explain to savages that 'tis not us but the Gov'nor that won't pay the treaty goods."

"Ach!" Old Gustav Renz shook his fist. "To de debbil mit dot Goffner unt der stadt *auch!"* He turned to his favorite crony, La Roche, whose swarthy skin looked darker than usual because of his rage. "You hear dot, mein freund?"

"I 'ear zat, mon ami." La Roche's voice was husky with anger. "An' to ze devil wiz zis Goov'nor an' wiz zis Statt *aussi."*

"What shall we do?" some one asked.

"Ay, 'tis doin' and not talkin' counts," Andy said.

"I'll tell ye, lads. I did some talkin' in yon House mysel'. Oh, ay. For when I heard yon scoundrel a-busin' us that saved their homes and their lives, I jumped up on the bit o' platform where him they call the Speaker was standin' an' I gave them a piece o' my mind. Oh, ay! I asked them, verra polite, what good a' their gold an' their riches an' their cattle an' businesses was to them that day when we drilled in the snow atop o' Yellow Mountain an' looked down on the Back Country ravaged by the mountain man, an' on beyond toward Charlotte where lay Cornwallis an' a' his redcoats. An' I was goin' on fine and strong to tell them what I thought o' such a nest o' skunks, when some o' them started to roar at me about breakin' the rules o' the House or some such foolishness: an' others made a grab at me to pull me down. But the Runner wouldn't stand for that, ye see. Oh, nay, not Runner! He jumped in wi' his tomahawk—which is against rules, too, I don't doubt! An' somehow I got Tuleko outdoors again wi'out any blood spilt, an' a-horse an' racin' for home. But I'm afeared he left a verra bad impression."

Sevier's sudden burst of laughter led the lusty shouts that went round.

"Oh, ay," Andy continued solemnly, though his eyes twinkled; "an', Jack, ye should ha'e heard the Runner tellin' me, confidential, his opeenion o' the Gov'nor an' a' the rest o' yon fatheads. If ye think it sounds like a beehive in Scotch, Jack, all I can answer ye is that ye should leesten to it once

in Delaware! 'Twould chill yer blood in mid-July. An' let me tell ye, too——"

"We have no time to listen to silly chatter. Our lives and our homes are in danger at this moment," Jonathan Tipton interrupted, with a sour look at Andy.

"What shall we do?" some one asked again.

John Tipton pushed forward in front of Sevier.

"*I'll* tell you what to do!" he cried. "Keep that tax money at home. Yes, boys! Secede from the state of North Carolina and form a new state here west of the mountains! A new state, boys, with our own House, our own Senate, and our own Governor!"

"That's the talk, John," his brother shouted. "A new state, boys!"

"A new state! Our own state!" The idea caught like wildfire. In vain Sevier attempted to stop the flaming wind of enthusiasm that swept over the Wataugans. In vain he pointed out that it was an illegal step, whereby they would put themselves hopelessly in the wrong and also set every Christian state against them. He might as well have raised his voice against a forest fire, for all the effect he had. For the first time in Watauga—and the last—Nolichucky Jack's associates refused to be led by him.

"Law be blowed!" said the sheriff. "We're through with North Carolina!"

"Jack," said Andy, "I never thought the day would come when I'd be opposite to ye. But, Jack,

I've had enough o' North Carolina, too. An' I'm for the new state. An' so is Tuleko," he added. "Runner cast his vote for it wi' his tomahawk the day we were ower there."

To see Sevier unable to call one man to his side in Watauga, where for years he had been the uncrowned king, delighted the jealous, venomous soul of John Tipton.

"Every dog has his day, and yours is past, Jack," he said, with a sneer. Already he saw himself occupying the fallen leader's place. To him, John Tipton, men would rally. John Tipton would be the first governor of the new state. In every other state men would be talking of John Tipton, the bold and statesmanlike; John Tipton, the statemaker.

"We'll give you a safe conduct over the hills, Jack," said Jonathan.

"I'll not request it of you," Sevier answered calmly enough, though his eyes flashed. "You're wrong, boys; and I've tried to make you see it. That was my duty. Now all I can say to you is, that if you are resolved to take the wrong step, then I've no choice but to take it with you. North Carolina may clap every man of us into prison for it. And, when the history of this territory comes to be written, our names may go down to posterity as a tribe of traitors and pirates——"

"Pirate's a pretty name an' a compliment to any brave man!" This came in the stentorian tones of Old Admrial Shark.

"But, boys," Sevier continued, "I'm with you

And, never fear, I'll take my full share of the responsibility. Three cheers for the new state!"

The roar of enthusiasm which followed almost shook old Tom's smithy. When it died down, Tuleko, who had not understood a word but had merely sensed that the shouts were directed against a group of men over the hills not at all esteemed by him, emitted a long blood-curdling war whoop. As there was silence for a few moments he relieved his feelings further by singing loudly a brief and ferocious war chant:

"Death I make, singing
Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh!
Bones I hack, singing
Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh!
Scalps I take, singing
Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh!"

Silent Scot was the only person who understood the words. His lip twitched humorously. He said to the Runner in Delaware:

"It is a wise thing that winter comes soon to make Runner-on-the-Wind a Quaker once more."

Tuleko grinned shamelessly. At that moment a man came up with a message for John Tipton from one of his friends, a man named Spencer. The messenger was Hans Kaffer, the renegade white who had been with the Chickamaugans in Dragging Canoe's war, had been badly wounded by Tuleko before Sevier's house, and had been nursed back to life by Mrs. Sevier. Hans, under Sevier's pro-

tection, had been allowed to continue in Watauga and had recently been taken on by the Tipton brothers to care for their horses. A stupid, rather brutish, and sullen creature, he had no friends and apparently no loyalties nor affections. Really, only Sevier's wife ever said a kind word about him; and she was touched by the fact that, as each month or so brought out its special flowers, Hans came to her back door with a bouquet for her.

"Spencer has sprained his ankle," said Tipton, after reading the note which Hans had given him. "I'll go along and tell him about this." He started out of the smithy and mounted his horse. As he gathered up the reins he looked back once malevolently at Sevier and said, "I don't trust you in this business, Jack. You're not in it on the square, but only for ambition—to hold your followers and get honors for yourself. And, I warn you now, I mean to watch you."

"John, I've been too busy in this district for years to find time to explain my motives to any man, even to the Governor," Sevier replied with casual, smiling good humor. "As to watching me—" his eyes twinkled—"well, John, every man will bear watching once in his life at least. Give Spencer my regards and tell him I'm sorry about his ankle."

John Tipton received this with a snarl. He drew his black brows together and looked down with a commanding glance upon the group he was leaving.

"Boys, see that every man in Watauga is at the land office—no, better make it the courthouse—on

Thursday at noon sharp. We will elect officers, organize a military force, and draw up a constitution." He nodded curtly and rode off, accompanied by his brother. It was evident that the man at the head of the new state was John Tipton.

"John talks like he was elected governor already," said Burke, looking after Tipton with a puzzled, wondering air.

"*Him* the Governor!" Old One-Eye bellowed indignantly. "Nay, nay! my pretty Jack's the governor. I'll cut your throats, lads, one by one, if you don't make my pretty Jack a governor!"

Sevier roared: "Never mind who is governor, boys. The important thing is to hold off the Cherokees. We must buy the goods which those two traders, Adams and Leckie, brought in last night on their way to the Indian towns, and send them on to the Cherokees at once as an earnest of our good faith. I'll give Tuleko that job. Andy, you hunt up those traders and get the goods on my word of honor to pay for them; and see that Tuleko starts with them at once."

"Ay. An' 'tis lucky for the new state there's a ambeetious scamp in it like John Sevier whose word o' honor is as good as gold wi' every man roundabout, red or white," said Andy, who was in a rage because of John Tipton's insults.

Sevier smiled. "Now, where's my horse, Admiral?" he said. "I must get home and write a letter to the Governor of North Carolina, telling him as softly as ink will do it, that the men by the

Western Waters have—*bolted!*" Laughing, he sprang to the saddle and galloped off.

Sevier was past master of the art of diplomatic letter writing. His missive to the Governor was a gem. He stated, as was true, that he fully realized the terrible economic pressure east of the mountains where the people had been practically stripped clean by the war. But, he pointed out, the men by the Western Waters had also suffered greatly, not because of British occupation to be sure, but because of Indian wars; it might be said that for three years their rifles had not been out of their hands. Now it was vital for their lives and for the continuance of white settlement in Tennessee to have peace with the powerful Cherokee Nation whose towns lay so close to the white men's homesteads. It would be, therefore, greatly to the advantage of North Carolina, at this time, to be rid of the burden and the responsibility of the Overhill district, whose inhabitants were willing to make the supreme sacrifice of separation from the parent state in order to free the eastern communities of an intolerable financial load. He reminded the Governor that North Carolina had made provision, in her constitution, for the erection of her Overhill territory into a separate state whenever conditions should warrant it. Undoubtedly the time had arrived. Therefore, confident of North Carolina's understanding, approval, and coöperation, etc., etc.

This deft communication exploded like a bomb in the eastern capital. Apparently the easterners were

so oppressed by their own troubles that they could not grasp the western situation at all. They seemed unable to realize that what immediately menaced Tennessee was a confederation of Cherokees and Creeks, under whose joint attacks, from north and south, white civilization would be extinguished and the life of every man, woman and child forfeited. So the Governor wrote in hostile vein, calling the Overhill men rebels and indirectly threatening them with all the legal and military machinery of the state.

Whereupon Sevier, still dignified, urbane, and considerate, reminded the Governor that fear was a poor weapon for him to attempt to employ against warriors of the stripe of the men by the Western Waters. The upshot of it all was that, whether the Governor liked it or not, there was going to be a new state west of the mountains. Now, when the lawful authorities of North Carolina found that they could get no satisfaction from Nolichucky Jack, except the purely literary satisfaction of perusing his beautifully written letters, they got in touch with John Tipton. If John Tipton would remain loyal to North Carolina he would be elevated to the military command which, hitherto, had been Sevier's. Hans Kaffer gave the letter to Tipton on Thursday morning. He said that Jimmy Breed had brought it to his cabin at dead of night and ridden hastily away again across the mountains. Jimmy, it seems, had been engaged as messenger because he knew the trail so well and was familiar with the short

route through Old One-Eye's pass. Fortunately for Jimmy, Tuleko had been sleeping soundly that night after his swift and fatiguing trip to the chief Cherokee town, and back—instead of prowling through the near-by woods hunting 'possum, as he was fond of doing! Tuleko had also brought a message into Watauga, a verbal message, not a letter, for Old Tassel was not given to writing. It was a very important message, important to Sevier and to every one else: it promised the too long harassed Wataugans security.

"Tell John Sevier these words:" said Old Tassel. "Many times we have fought and Old Tassel has tried to kill you. But always Old Tassel has been able to say of John Sevier, 'he is a good man: he speaks the Old Beloved Speech.' I sorrow because for a little while I doubted John Sevier. Now, because you have sent goods, I know that John Sevier does indeed speak the Old Beloved Speech. John Sevier is a good man."

"The Old Beloved Speech" was a Cherokee phrase meaning the honest word in the mouths of men; and the fact that Old Tassel, as spokesman for his nation, used it in his message to Sevier, meant that the Cherokees were satisfied. There would be no bloody raid on Watauga.

" 'Tis a gran' day for makin' a new state," Andy remarked, blinking up at the glistening blue sky. His father nodded. Duncan was already mounting to start for the courthouse.

"Where's Tuleko?" he asked. " 'Tis not like him

to disappear when he's wanted. 'Tis time we were hastin' along."

"I dinna ken where Runner has taken himsel' off to. Better go, father. Jack may be needin' you to talk over the politics o' it before the votin' starts."

Duncan MacPhail nodded again and rode off briskly.

Silent Scot ran back across the clearing towards the house, then paused, and turned toward the woodshed. He had heard a zizzing noise which indicated that some one in there was grinding a blade. He pushed the door open. Tuleko extended a bright tomahawk for his inspection, singing to himself in a soft, sweet murmur:

"Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh!
Bones I hack singing——"

"Ye've put an edge on it like the point o' a lightnin' flash," Andy said. "But what on earth makes ye waste time sharpenin' a tomahawk now when we ought to be on our way?"

"Tomahawk ver' good for make new state for Jack," Tuleko answered sincerely. "When newstate him come courthouse an' Tipton see him, Tipton he want grab newstate, mebbe. Tuleko watch Tipton. When Tuleko see Tipton put hand out, like t'is"—Runner's lean brown hand darted out with a grasping motion of the fingers—"for quick grab him newstate off table, t'en Tuleko say, 'Tipton, you no touch him newstate! Newstate him belong Jack!' T'en Tipton mebbe no listen Tuleko.

T'en Tuleko say, 'Tipton, you bad man. Much better you dead quick.' An'—zip! zick!"—he swung the tomahawk with a down stroke that left little to the imagination—"no more Tipton."

Andy scratched his head; he had a puzzled expression.

"I guess 'tis no use tryin' to explain to ye, Runner, that a new state isn't somethin' ye put on a table like a haunch of venison on a platter. But I'll go so far as to say that, if ye'll take my advice, ye'll leave yon hatchet in the woodshed."

"No," said Tuleko very definitely. He ran across the yard to their horses.

"Well," Andy said, as they took the trail from the gate, "I hope ye'll remember the time o' year, for 'tis gettin' on to November, and that ye're a Quaker now."

"Quaker him no like see man steal. Tuleko good Quaker. No let Tipton steal him newstate."

"Now, Runner, ye'd best listen to me while——"

"Silent," Tuleko interrupted, very positively, "all time in woods Silent one good Injun. All time wit' Tuleko Silent one good Injun, like brother. But sometime Silent him stay too long wit' white man—like las' t'ree, four fi' sleeps, when Tuleko him go away Cherokee town wit' goods. T'en Tuleko see Silent him get too much like white man sometime. On'y sometime," he added generously. Evidently Tuleko felt that Silent Scot's case was not quite hopeless, at least so long as he himself kept close by to see that the skin of Andy MacPhail did not

bleach entirely white! He shook out the bridle rein over Ahyuni's neck, a gesture which sent that little Cherokee mongrel head down lickety-split for the courthouse.

"Scalps I take, singing heh-yeh! . . ." The buoyant lyric floated back to Andy, pounding along behind on Brandywine.

The two boys stopped to cool their dust-parched mouths with the crystal waters of a rill that ran by the courthouse.

"Good," Tuleko grunted. He lay flat, lapping up the water, like Ahyuni, nose deep in the creek.

"Here's hopin' ye don't create any accidents," said Andy, drinking this anxious toast from the goblet of his cupped hands. They tethered their horses and joined the crowd within.

It was a solemn moment, for Watauga's beloved pastor had opened the convention with a fervent prayer and was now leading the assemblage in the old hymn of the Covenanters. The thoughts of many went back to the dawn at Sycamore Shoals when they had sung that hymn together just before starting on their hunt for Ferguson, the Wolf of the border. When the hymn ended Tuleko, who had mounted a bench for an uninterrupted view of the speaker's table on which he saw nothing new, grunted into Andy's ear:

"Where him stop newstate? No see him on table. What him look like?"

"They haven't brought it in yet," Andy explained quickly. "I'll show it to ye soon as they fetch it."

He gave a sigh of relief. To be sure he was not being quite fair with Tuleko, in playing upon his ignorance in this fashion; but he felt justified. Ever since taking those Chickamaugan scalps at the river ford, the Runner and his tomahawk had been somewhat excited and difficult to manage! It would be simply too dreadful if they both got busy here today; though, Andy told himself secretly, the loss of John Tipton could be borne, on his part anyway, without any exaggerated frenzy of grief. He leaned forward, listening intently as the pastor began to speak.

"We are about to frame a constitution and to choose officers for a new state. But that state has not yet a name. Let us give the first Western state a name which will embody the ideals we have lived for, fought and died for; the ideals which have compelled us to separate from our brethren on the eastern side of the hills. I suggest the name of Frankland—meaning Land of the Free."

"Land of the Free! How do you like the name, boys?" Sevier cried. It was plain that he himself was enthusiastic for it.

He was answered with cheers. No one objected to the name of Frankland. Everybody wanted it. That point settled, the convention proceeded to draft a constitution. Sevier was one of the very few men present who had made any study at all of law and politics; so, inevitably, he was presently seated at the table with the quill pen in his hand. And he himself suggested most of the provisions

that were written down and adopted that day. Sevier was an idealist, who passionately desired that Frankland's constitution should embody noble dreams; and, like many another idealist with a vast faith in the intrinsic goodness of humanity, he believed, in those days at least, that a nobly worded set of laws could not fail to make noble the men who lived under them. Among the phrases of the constitution were: "This State shall be called the Commonwealth of Frankland and shall be governed by a General Assembly of the representatives of the freemen of the same, a Governor and Council, and proper courts of justice . . . the House of Representatives of the freemen of the State shall consist of persons most noted for wisdom and virtue . . ." and, among the noble aims which were copiously listed, was the "intent to encourage literature and everything truly laudable." As yet those poverty-stricken, harassed Indian fighters on the farthest frontier had no literature at all; some of them, perhaps most of them, only knew there was such a thing as "literature" because they had seen the pastor's library! Never mind. If literature helped to make men wise and virtuous, then Frankland would get some somewhere.

Thus far matters had progressed peacefully. No one, not even the Tiptons, dissented. What arguments took place were about how to improve the provisions already accepted. Then the consideration of a man for governor arose. John Tipton

made a speech outlining the noble and wise qualities which the Governor of Frankland must possess and also the mean, sly, ambitious traits which he must not have.

"He must not be a man who thirsts for power to use for his own selfish advantage; but a man whose courage, wisdom, unselfish service, and integrity of purpose none can doubt." So concluded Tipton and sat down. By a prearranged plan this was his friend Spencer's cue to rise and cry loudly:

"There is that man, boys! John Tipton!"

Then Hans Kaffer and a group of such hangers-on to whom the Tiptons gave odd jobs and pennies were to shout and applaud and war whoop and stir up so much excitement that John Tipton would sail in as governor on the crest of the wave. Perhaps the accident to Spencer's ankle made him slow in moving. He had only begun to get up on his feet when Andy sprang aloft on his bench and yelled:

"Nolichucky Jack!"

"Jack! Jack!" shouted Tuleko, leaping up beside Andy. Tuleko did not know what it all meant, of course; but if Andy was going to jump in the air yelling "Jack," *he* was going to do it too.

"Andy, get down and be quiet," Sevier commanded.

"No, Jack Sevier," Andy shouted back. "I'll never get down nor stop shoutin' for ye till ye're

Gov'nor o' Frankland. John Tipton, ye've told us what like a man we need; an' ye've made a picture o' Jack wi' yer words that's truer than paint. Come on, boys! Make our Jack gov'nor!"

"Heh-yeh! Heh-yeh! Yeh-ooo-ooo," the Runner trilled off into a wonderful war whoop, which was caught up by men on all sides. It might be said that John Sevier was elevated into the governorship of the first state west of the Appalachians not by the counted votes of his civilized white brethren but on the swelling rhythms of the fiercest, most savage form of human expression; namely, the red man's war cry.

John Tipton's face turned black with rage. Why not, indeed? This was the very demonstration he had staged in advance for himself, whereby his own name should sweep the convention like a flame! And now the wild, gleeful shouts of Wataugans, who had been stampeded by a couple of obstreperous boy scouts—one of them an Indian, too!—had carried the man he hated into the highest office of the new state. Well, there was the letter from the Governor of North Carolina in his pouch, offering him honors. He would accept those honors! And, as representative of North Carolina, he would carry on a civil war, if need be, against Frankland—until he had pulled John Sevier down.

When the cheers were over John Tipton called his brother and his followers to him and paraded to the door. Every one watched this move, puzzled.

"Where are you goin', John?" asked Sheriff

Burke. Tipton turned in the doorway, and drew his pistol.

"I'd be doing no more than my duty if I fired," he snarled. "You thought I was ready to be a traitor to my beloved state, North Carolina, eh? I only wanted to find out what sort of rogues you were. I fooled you all. I stand for North Carolina. I warn you that your proceedings put you within reach of the law. And, mark this—I'm speaking to you, John Sevier—*I* am the law now in Watauga; for the Governor has stripped you of your title as Colonel of Washington County and given it to me. If you try to exercise the power of a governor in this county you will run foul of me. You hear? You will run foul of *me!*"

"Maybe I will, John, maybe I will," Nolichucky Jack responded cheerfully. Tipton seemed about to choke, as he glared for a moment, speechless, at Sevier. Then he rushed out. Burke got slowly to his feet and lumbered to the door. He stood there for a few moments looking down the road where the Tiptons were already lost to view in a cloud of dust.

"John's makin' purty good time," was all he said, as he came back to his seat. A buzz of talk began, about what North Carolina might do, about what laws the new state should make first, and what salaries they should pay. After some discussion they settled the Governor's salary. John Sevier would be paid "two hundred mink skins per annum."

Andy felt Tuleko's fingers pulling his sleeve.

"Where him newstate?" the Runner wanted to know.

"Oh—— Jack's got it," Silent Scot answered, his lip twitching with mirth.

CHAPTER IX

SILENT SCOT'S LONG SHOT

Civil war raged in the land of the free. In the little town of Buffalo John Tipton held sway in the name of North Carolina. Ten miles distant, in Jonesborough, sat David Campbell, judge, appointed by John Sevier, the Governor of Frankland. Thus the men by the Western Waters had two law courts, two jails, two sheriffs, besides one governor west and another east of the mountains, and ditto as to legislative Assembly and Senate. It happened frequently that the rival sheriffs met as they pursued their duties and whenever they met they fought out the immediate issue with their fists. Sheriff Burke of Frankland was a more powerful man physically than his opponent. He generally succeeded in taking prisoners away from Tipton's sheriff and fetching them home not much the worse for the encounter. Franklanders would descend upon Tipton's jail and set free the captives who had been imprisoned solely because they were loyal to the new state. In gangs, Tipton's men raided Campbell's courtroom and carried off the records. And, in gangs, Franklanders raided Tipton's court and carried off *his* records.

One day in early spring when the weather was still cold and the winds high, the first of several

very serious incidents happened. Tipton sent a gang of his roughest men into Jonesborough to arrest Duncan MacPhail, who was now land agent for Frankland. To make the matter as humiliating and as serious as possible for Duncan and as painful for his family, the charge of theft as well as the usual "defying the laws and government of the sovereign State of North Carolina" was laid against him. This was a very mean move on Tipton's part; and his spleen at Andy for having stampeded the Frankland convention to Sevier was the cause of it.

He chose a critical time for his petty revenge. The Indians, seeing white men again in civil strife, had dug up the buried hatchet and taken the warpath; and the outlying settlements of Greene County had called on Sevier for help. Sevier had taken a force with him and had left Duncan MacPhail in charge of the defenses of Jonesborough and its environs. When Indians began to make raids, there was no knowing how far the menace would spread. The Cherokees of Telliko might remain faithful to the treaty; and then they might not. If they decided to fight, they were quite likely to come down on the settlements about Jonesborough. The fact that Sevier and a part of Frankland's militia were so far away might, in short, be reason enough for their taking the warpath. So Duncan's presence and vigilance were important for the safety of Jonesborough. Tipton understood this as well as any man.

Yet on this particular chill, windy day he rode

Both boys broke through to Ferguson's side.

(See page 129)

into Jonesborough with fifty men and arrested Duncan, who was just about to leave the land office and go home. Duncan was alone except for the Scalpin' Scot and Old One-Eye, who had dropped in for a chat. He had sent out Andy and Tuleko in different directions to look for "Indian signs."

When Tipton entered, Old Tom was ministering to Duncan's pride by commenting in high terms on the extraordinary growth of the Scalpin' Scot. It was true that Rob Roy were less chubby and much taller than when Tom had first seen them.

"An' me bouncin' along at a rope's end with Andy an' Tuleko, the grand lads, the hearty lads, pullin' me atwixt 'em," he went on in proud reminiscence. "An' there was the Scalpin' Scot sittin' on the doorstep! Two as pretty lads as ever I saw. An' look at 'em now, the beauties! Look at 'em, Duncan—the pretty, tall lads! Strikin' near twelve o'clock on the dial of the years."

"Ye're almost talkin' poetry about my braw laddies," said Duncan in a satisfied tone. "But 'tis not for me to say ye could have a better subject."

At that moment Tipton and some of his men burst in and seized Duncan, while two other nailed a bulletin on the outside of the door. The bulletin, among other insults, called Duncan MacPhail a thief.

"Oh, ye vile scum!" roared Old Shark, standing on the step and shaking his fist after Tipton and his gang. The twins said nothing. They had something to do; and, true to their natures, they went

about it swiftly. In a trice they had ripped the affronting bulletin from the door and torn it to shreds.

"Tom, we'll be off home to tell mother," said Rob.

"Ye'd best go see to the army, Tom," said Roy. The Scalpin' Scot always spoke of "the army" in time of war. In the hunting season they called the same men "the boys." And when they saw the "boys" and the "army" going to the legislative Assembly hall they would say "there go the gentlemen o' the government." Mounting their ponies now, Rob Roy galloped for home.

Tom had not gone far when he met Tuleko. The Runner's eyes darted black lightning when he heard that Duncan was on his way to jail. But he said nothing, only nodded briefly, when the Admiral advised him to catch up with the twins and see them safely home. Old One-Eye limped on and soon met Andy.

" 'Tis well ye sent Runner after Rob Roy." Andy spoke quietly, though his face was white and his eyes burning. "For I've seen Indians in the hills yonder an' I'm no' likin' their actions. An' wi' my father gone 'tis my duty to take his place. I'll ask the boys if they don't think it best some o' us should ride into the hills an' make the savages show us if they mean war, or if 'tis only huntin' they're bent on."

Following this plan Silent Scot and twenty others were presently several miles back in the hills par-

leying with a band of Indians. Perhaps the redskins had meant mischief when they set out that morning, for they were all very young men; and the very young man of the tribes thirsted for distinction and for recognition from the older warriors. However that may be, the resolute but friendly demeanor of Silent Scot and his followers had its effect and the parley ended in a feast round the camp fire. As the moon rose, red men and white men turned in opposite directions homeward. It was because Silent Scot was occupied with this business that he knew nothing of Tuleko's movements between the sunset of that day and the dawn of the next.

"Ye didn't come wi' Rob Roy at all. Where were ye?" Andy asked, waking as Tuleko entered in the first dim gray light.

"Rob Roy him get home safe. Him man now. No need Tuleko. Thee no here. Duncan go. No meat. Tuleko kill two deer." He threw himself down and fell asleep. What he had said was perfectly true; but it was not the whole truth. Tuleko now both understood and spoke English clearly; though he would never acquire the white man's diction. He could have told Andy much more in either English or Delaware had he chosen. As it was, Silent Scot only began to have a vague suspicion about the Runner's activities during the past night when Sevier and a handful of his men, outriding the rest, came up shouting boisterously with Duncan in their midst.

"Father!" Andy shouted, crimson with excitement. "How did ye get out o' jail?"

"I was never in it," Duncan answered with a laugh. "Be quiet now while I tell ye about it." He dismounted, threw his reins to Tuleko, and stood, telling his tale, with his arm about his wife's waist and Rob Roy clinging to his jerkin. "'Twas this way. Ye see, John Tipton wanted everybody to know about him takin' that thievin' rascal, Duncan MacPhail, to jail. So what does John do but ride me hither an' yon up an' down the trails to the door o' one homestead after another. An', wi' all that, 'tis past ten o'clock when we come to Buffalo. An' what do we find there? Fire! Ay! ay! A fire right enough. Somehow the jail's caught afire an' 'tis near burned to ashes. Oh, ay! Then somebody asks John where his two boys, Fred an' Bill, have got to, for they went out into the clearin' to fetch wood an' they haven't come back. An' in a' the excitement I got off—for I was watchin' my chance, ye see—an' along a piece o' the way I run into Nolichucky Jack comin' home. Down in Buffalo they fear 'tis Indians fired the jail an' carried off the two youngest Tiptons."

"If that's so, boys," said Sevier, "we'll have to forget our differences and join with Tipton and help him get his boys back."

"Sure enough," Burke agreed, speaking for the rest as well as for himself.

"Yes. We don't make war on children in Frankland," said Mrs. Sevier. She and the smaller Seviers

had been staying at the MacPhails' while Jack was on the frontier, leaving Sevier's place in the care of their trusted servants. Sevier called his two elder sons, who arrived now with the rest of "the army" as Rob Roy would say; and told them to go to the homestead, see how things were there, and report to him later.

"I'm goin' to eat up every chunk of Duncan's deer meat and sleep twelve hours on his kitchen floor," Sevier said. He strode indoors, laughing.

"Where are ye goin', Runner?" Andy demanded. Tuleko had jumped on Ahyuni's back.

"Tuleko go wit' Jack, boys. Mebbe shoot some more deer. Need plenty meat."

"Oh, ay. That's a good idea," Silent Scot agreed. He went indoors to help his mother and Mrs. Sevier set out food for Jack and his men.

Nolichucky Jack had his feed of deer meat but not the comfortable nap he coveted. It was still fairly early in the afternoon when Ahyuni with Tuleko on his back streaked into the yard out of a cloud of yellow dust like a lightning flash from a low-hung, sulphurous sky. The Runner bore news that was as soothing as the application of flame to gunpowder. Feeling, no doubt, that his Welsh Quaker English was inadequate for the story as well as unsuited to the state of his emotions, the Runner told his tale to Silent Scot in Delaware.

"When we came to the trail that runs from the road to Jack's place, we met John Tipton with many men. All Jack's servants and his horses were with

them. Tipton had taken them. James Sevier asked him, 'Did you enter my father's house?' James was very angry. Tipton mocked at him and said that he had walked all through the house and that there was not a cabin on Sevier's land which he had not entered except the cabin where once Jimmy Breed lived. 'I did not go in there,' he said, 'only because it once smelled of skunks and it might be bad luck for me to go in; because where skunks once were, there they like to go again.' Then James Sevier was furious and he said very bold things to Tipton, who is, himself, a mean and cowardly skunk. Tipton seized James Sevier and his brother and tied their hands behind them. Then he said to me, 'You dirty redskin, you——' "

"What!" Andy shouted angrily. "He called you that?" Tuleko nodded and went on, unmoved:

"He said, 'You go back to John Sevier and tell him that I have taken his sons and his servants and his horses. Tell him that if he does not come and submit himself to me and humbly give up newstate' " —Tuleko threw that word in, in English—" 'I will hang his sons as rebels and I will keep all his horses.' Silent, do you know who was with Tipton? Jimmy Breed. Now you tell Jack." Tuleko ran his thumb softly along the edge of his tomahawk, then started for the woodshed where the whetstone was kept.

Andy rushed indoors and shook Sevier awake by the shoulder. "Wake up, Jack, wake up! 'Tis terrible news we've got!"

Sevier was on his feet in an instant. Andy's news

threw him into such a fury that, for several moments, he could not speak.

"Go tell Bonnie Kate," he said at last huskily, and went out.

"Where are you goin', Jack?" Andy cried, running after him.

"To get my sons!"

In a few words Sevier informed his men of Tipton's latest villainy.

"An' ye were sayin' only a few hours ago how we must help save Tipton's lads if the Indians had got them!" Duncan exclaimed.

"We'll all go with you, Jack," one man after another shouted. They would start in an hour. Meanwhile they must replenish their stock of ammunition. Every man of old Watauga was determined to have his part in the rescue of Nolichucky Jack's boys. The settlement was safe, so far as Indians were concerned; so they were all going. The first warrior to arrive at the rendezvous at a point on the main road just outside Jonesborough was Admiral Tom Shark. Swinging his cutlass, he limped along shouting encouragment to two strong old nags that were dragging a low cart. On the cart was a small cannon. The cannon was a souvenir of King's Mountain. It had belonged to Ferguson's army. Some of the Wataugans had lugged it home, with a few cannon balls, and set it up in Old One-Eye's smithy. It was an exhibit pointed to with local pride. Tom had never allowed it to rust. He often said that, like his cutlass, it reminded

him of the glorious days when he was "King of the Seas."

"More sail, there, my hearties!" he yelled, and prodded the nags with his cane.

Presently the Renz and La Roche families came up. In these two old men, German and French, the cannon woke a thrill. It brought back to them also youthful scenes where they had fought for loyalties and causes almost forgotten now.

"We can nevaire take heem wiz onlee two 'orse," said La Roche.

"Nein," Renz agreed. "Mein house and yours is nearest——" He did not wait to explain but dispatched his sons at once for six of his own work horses and six of La Roche's. In a short while the Renz boys were back again with the horses in harness and a large coil of heavy rope. By the time the army arrived, the Renz and La Roche boys had seven span of horses harnessed after a fashion to the gun carriage. The horses were strong and took the trail at a gallop.

"Fare'ee well, pretty lads!" Old Tom bellowed. He was seated in the cart on a pile of cannon balls, leaning back against the body of the cannon, to which he clung tenaciously to avoid being pitched out as the vehicle plunged and rocked over the rough trail.

"We'll use that cannon if Tipton forces us to it," Sevier said. He led his men straight to Tipton's place on the outskirts of Buffalo. They surrounded the house, screening themselves behind trees. Then

they set the old British cannon in a good position, its nose pointed at the house.

"Where's Tuleko?" Andy inquired as they waited for Tipton's answer to the message Sevier had sent by one of the La Roche boys. The Runner had been at the rendezvous with him and for a few miles they had ridden side by side, then Tuleko had dropped behind. Andy had ridden on, never doubting that Tuleko was at his heels. Now there was not a sign of him. Andy was puzzled. It was certainly most unlike Tuleko to be late for a war! The fear crossed his mind that the Runner might be conducting a private campaign of his own somewhere. There was a rumor now that an Indian had actually been seen coming from the direction of the jail in Buffalo at the time of the fire. So the Widow Brown, who kept an inn near Jonesborough, had told Sheriff Burke when he stopped there, to give her the news about Sevier's sons, on his way to the meeting place. Who was that Indian? Well, Silent Scot began to have his doubts! He kept an anxious eye out for Tuleko.

"He's a wonderfu' scout an' a gran' friend, is the Runner. But he's a redskin after a'; painted from the inside, where it won't wash out," he mused, with troubled brow.

There were others than Andy who were anxious that day. Men on both sides knew that no condition had yet arisen in Tennessee so perilous as this encounter between two groups of white men. Tip-

ton's friends, like Sevier's, were urging peace upon their leader. But Tipton's jealousy and hatred of Sevier had put him beyond the bounds of reason, and Sevier's only answer to his counsellors was:

"Where are my boys?"

For several hours nothing happened but an exchange of messages. Duncan acted as Sevier's emissary, and a lawyer named Watkins filled that office for Tipton. They met midway and conferred in somewhat this fashion:

"This is a bad business, Mr. Watkins, an' it must not come to shootin'. Ye'll agree to that," Duncan would say.

"It must not, Mr. MacPhail," Watkins would answer. "What do you advise?"

"Can ye no' induce Colonel Tipton to let the boys go, Mr. Watkins? I could guarantee ye that we'd start for home wi' them."

"No. Colonel Tipton won't let them go while Governor Sevier has that cannon trained on his door. But if you can get the Governor of Frankland to go home, Mr. MacPhail, I'll pledge my honor to bring his boys to him safe an' sound."

Now ordinarily, nothing would have induced Watkins or any Tipton man to give Sevier the title of "Governor" nor to acknowledge the existence of a state named "Frankland." Nor would Duncan have referred to North Carolina's representative at any other time as "Colonel" Tipton. John Tipton was called various names by good Franklanders, but never anything so mild as "Colonel."

"I'm afraid the Governor won't go wi'out the boys, Mr. Watkins. He's hot an' angry, ye see. An' 'tis a fact I'm not tellin' ye the message precisely as he gave it to me."

"I quite understand, Mr. MacPhail. And I may say, as a lawyer and therefore careful about language, that I am not giving you Colonel Tipton's message verbatim."

"An' what's that—verbatim?" Duncan inquired interestedly.

"Word for word. It is Latin."

"Latin, is it? Well, well! The pastor, he's a great man for Latin. Have ye ever talked Latin wi' him, Mr. Watkins? For he's often sayin' how he'd like a friend again to chat wi' in Latin."

"I have not had that privilege yet, Mr. MacPhail; but I hope for it. Truly, it is only a folly to be fighting when a man might be improving his mind. And it is very disconcerting to be a lawyer by the book, so to speak, in a country where gunpowder is the sovereign power of the state, and the key to the constitution is a tomahawk."

"Ay, ay! ye're right, Mr. Watkins."

Then Tipton's voice, roaring from among the trees, would break across this pleasant converse with:

"Tell him I'll hang them. That takes few words."

And Sevier would shout:

"What are you gabbing about? Tell him I'll blow his house to small dust. That's soon said."

And Duncan, wagging his head solemnly, would say:

"I hope ye won't repeat *that,* Mr. Watkins."

"Indeed, no, Mr. MacPhail. And if you overheard any irritated remark of Colonel Tipton's——"

"I'll forget it, Mr. Watkins, afore I've gone ten paces from this spot."

Then they would salute each other formally and return to their respective chiefs, and tell them whatever seemed best for the purpose of keeping them from action. Both ambassadors agreed that Tipton and Sevier must surely cool off before long, at least enough to listen to reason. The whole point now was to prevent them from doing anything. It was due to this suave and wily pair that not a rifle was fired, though the siege lasted for many hours. Only the cannon went off; and the old pirate was responsible for that. Old One-Eye's impatience broke bounds at last. He stamped across the clearing and yelled in that mighty voice of his, that if Tipton did not let the boys go at once, he, Admiral Tom Shark, late of the Spanish Main, would fire the cannon with his own hand.

Tipton, believing this to be a message from Sevier, responded by bringing out the two boys with halters round their necks. Old Tom limped back and touched off the cannon. Duncan had just time to seize the horses' heads and swing them round so that the cart swung too—and the shot went wild.

But Tipton had received all the impetus he needed to make him commit the crime from which his followers had thus far held him back. He dragged Sevier's two sons out under a tree, placed his armed men between them and Sevier's forces, and ordered Jimmy Breed to hang the boys there and then in full view of their frenzied father. But at that moment there was an unlooked-for diversion. Tuleko, on Ahyuni, dashed from the woods, leading a horse on which sat Tipton's two boys roped securely to the saddle. The Runner drew rein sharply, swung round, and elevated his tomahawk over the heads of the Tipton boys.

"Shoot that Indian!" Tipton roared. "No, don't!" he countermanded; for Tuleko had whirled to the other side of them so that the boys were in the direct line of fire. "Fools!" He himself caught the rope out of Jimmy Breed's hands. The battle was at a deadlock again; but now Watkins had a better chance of making Tipton listen to reason. After another parley between himself and Duncan the war ended. Tipton's and Sevier's sons were surrendered to their respective fathers, Sevier's servants and horses were likewise turned over to him, and the army of Frankland, with its cannon, marched home.

After supper, in the dewy and perfumed twilight hour, the two scouts sat on a log on the bank near the river, with the Scalpin' Scot squatting in the grass at their feet. Rob Roy had just been telling Andy and Tuleko how they had torn up Tipton's

bulletin. They added now that, when they were full-grown men, they would do much more than tear up insulting placards in time of war.

"Oh, ay," said Andy. "I don't doubt ye'll be terrible wolves." He glanced at Tuleko, who was busy making willow whistles for the twins. "What beats me," he went on casually, "is how you ran across Tipton's boys so convenient."

"Uh-huh," Tuleko grunted. "See boys on road. Tuleko t'ink better take um home." He put a whistle in his mouth and tested it, emitting gentle tootles.

"Oh, ay. Oh, ay. Ye would." Andy spoke with a sarcastic tone which the impassive Runner ignored as a duck's back ignores rain. "There's somethin' else that's puzzlin' me. 'Tis about yon jail that got afire all over, so 'tis said. What d'ye think about it, Runner?"

"Much wind. Fire him run fast on wind."

"Oh, ay. I never doubted there was some sort of a fast runner on the wind that night!"

"Tootle-ootle-ootle-oo." Runner-on-the-Wind played clear, shrill notes on the whistle. Satisfied with the melodic tone of both instruments, he gave them to Rob Roy, who raced off to show them to their father.

"Runner," said Andy, "there's dark things in ye that sets a man to thinkin' hard."

Tuleko cleaned his knife on his sash and stuck it in his sheath. He rose, stretching his arms.

"White man t'ink too much. Red man no t'ink;

him *do!* Come bed now." He pulled Andy to his feet, grinned once shamelessly in his face, then sprinted ahead of him to the house.

There was no doubt that the bold and proud State of Frankland was tottering to its fall. Congress, on North Carolina's plea, refused to recognize it. As a last resort, Sevier wrote to Benjamin Franklin asking his good offices on Frankland's behalf; and, in the hope that the aged philosopher and diplomat would feel bound by so signal a compliment, he changed the name of the State to "Franklin." But even this adroit move failed to bring him aid. He was thinking matters over very gravely one evening in his study when his wife came in with a bunch of wild flowers in her hand.

"Jack," she said, "that poor Hans Kaffer is outside. He wants to see you. Look at the lovely flowers he brought me!"

"Flowers to the fair, Kate." He smiled as he passed her the compliment. On the porch Hans was waiting for him. Out of poor Hans Kaffer's awkward, almost tongue-tied mumbling Sevier sifted a few vital facts. Hans thought a great deal of Mrs. Sevier; therefore he had come to warn Sevier that Tipton had a warrant from North Carolina to arrest him; that the arrest would be made early next morning, possibly even to-night; and that it was Tipton's intention to send him over the hills to Morgantown for trial. This, said Hans, would make Mrs. Sevier very unhappy. Could Sevier not escape? There was Kentucky where he had friends

such as Daniel Boone and George Rogers Clark; and Isaac Shelby, who had recently gone there. Tipton couldn't follow him to Kentucky.

"No, Hans. I can't run away. I thank you with all my heart for your friendly warning. And so will my wife later. I don't want her to be annoyed by Tipton; so you tell him he can find me at Widow Brown's inn."

Sevier went indoors again and told Bonnie Kate that some of the legislators of Franklin wanted to see him at the inn; and that she must not worry if he did not return till late the next day. Then he rode over to the MacPhails' home, to inform Duncan and Andy. He found them already aware of his serious position. Judge Campbell of Jonesborough was there, having come in to tell them of Tipton's latest move. All the MacPhails, including the Runner, were alarmed and angry.

"It's this way"—Campbell repeated his version now to Sevier—"Tipton came to me with orders from the Governor of North Carolina to issue a warrant for the arrest of John Sevier after, says he, 'having examined the affidavits of credible persons.' Well, Tipton had a dozen, maybe a score, of affidavits, sworn to by men that say they've seen John Sevier usurping the power of the State of North Carolina, setting up Franklin, and being called governor, and I don't know what all. And Tipton was furious because I refused to issue the warrant. 'John,' I told him, 'North Carolina says I'm to issue

it only after examining affidavits by *credible persons.* And I may as well tell you, first as last, that I would never consider that any affidavit *against* the said John Sevier has been made by a credible person.' With that he went off in a black rage to Judge Spencer in Buffalo."

"Why didn't he go to Spencer in the first place?" Andy asked. "Spencer's his own man. You're Franklin's judge."

"Ah, that's a sign, Andy. And I don't like it. I fear it means that North Carolina is going to make Jack the scapegoat, and pardon all the rest of us. That warrant was a bribe to me. I could continue to be a judge in Tennessee if I would issue it."

"I hope you're right," Sevier said. "I'm willing."

"That's to be expected from you, Jack," Campbell answered. "But, when that point comes to be argued with North Carolina, some of us here will have a word or two to say."

"Ay," said Duncan.

"What matter?" Tuleko demanded an explanation. Andy told him slowly in simple terms what Sevier had said; namely, that Tipton would come to arrest him at Widow Brown's inn next morning and would take or send him over the mountains.

"Ye'll have to stay here, Runner," he added. "Father an' I are going wi' Jack to the inn. And maybe to Morgantown too. I'm fearin' for Jack;

because 'twould be just like that mean devil, Tipton, to send Jimmy Breed east wi' Jack. Jimmy would murder Jack if he got the chance."

Tuleko nodded thoughtfully. After Sevier had left with Duncan and Andy, the Runner took down his rifle, and hung his shot pouch from his belt and his powderhorn about his neck.

"Where are ye goin', lad?" Mrs. MacPhail asked him.

"Hunt 'possum," Tuleko grunted back pleasantly from the doorway. Then he slipped out.

"Rob, d'ye ken what's another name for 'possum?" Roy whispered, as they tucked into bed.

"Oh, ay, Roy. I ken. Runner caught a 'possum t'other night an' skinned it. But if he catches 'possum to-night he'll *scalp* it."

"Here's wishin' the Runner good hunter's luck," said Roy through a yawn.

"Hunter's luck," Rob echoed drowsily.

Soon after sunrise Tipton and twenty men arrived at the inn. The group included such diverse characters as the courteous lawyer, Watkins, and ignorant, brutish Hans Kaffer, whose only human trait was the spark of gratitude, and Jimmy Breed, dregs of humanity. Widow Brown, a very portly middle-aged lady with a broad face and an aggressive chin, sat in her doorway in a big rocker.

"Mornin', gentlemen," she said, rather coolly.

"Sevier's inside, and we want him," Tipton said curtly, ignoring her salutation.

"Sorry, colonel; but the Governor's asleep. When

he wakes up I dare say he'll receive you." Her eyes snapped.

"I want him now. And I'm goin' in after him," Tipton told her. Widow Brown only planted her feet more firmly and rocked. Probably she hoped that, if she could only delay matters, some of Sevier's men would arrive and put Tipton to rout. The Colonel stormed; and the widow rocked, not neglecting to toss out a few sarcastic remarks which infuriated Tipton, whose temper was never very good. The altercation roused Sevier. He came down.

"Let me by, mother," he said genially and stepped out followed by Duncan and Andy. "Good morning, Colonel, what brings you out so early?"

Tipton rushed up to him and pressed his pistol against his body, letting out a stream of insults. Evidently he hoped to goad Sevier into an angry move that would give him a pretense for firing. If so, he little knew Sevier.

"What's the gun for, John? You see that I am unarmed." Then, raising his voice, he addressed Watkins, "Mr. Watkins, I esteem you as an honorable man; and so I call on you to witness that I have no weapon on me."

"I will witness to that," Watkins replied. He mounted the steps to Tipton's side. Balked, Tipton put up his pistol and called Jimmy to bring the handcuffs.

"That's a shame, John Tipton!" Duncan exclaimed.

"Jack," Andy cried, "will ye have me stand by an' see that?"

"Quiet, lad," said Sevier. Smiling contemptuously into Tipton's face he extended his wrists.

Despite his habit of obedience to his leader, Andy almost provoked a fight by his resolute efforts to accompany Sevier. He yielded at last, reluctantly, on Watkins' assurance that his own life would answer for the safety of Sevier's.

"Don't worry, lad. But ride off now and do me the favor to break the news to Bonnie Kate. And tell her I'll soon be home," said Sevier.

Andy watched the departure in the direction of Old One-Eye's pass. He was surprised to see Tipton fall out and take the road home toward Buffalo.

"That's one danger less for Jack," he said to Duncan. "Tipton's not going." Duncan nodded. It was a sore sight to the two loyal MacPhails—Nolichucky Jack, manacled and bound upon his horse, riding between Hans Kaffer and Jimmy Breed at the end of the line. Watkins, who was leading, had already disappeared from view.

"Father," said Andy, "as soon as I've told Bonnie Kate, I'm goin' after the La Roche and Renz boys; an' them, wi' the Seviers and the Runner, will make a fine army to go to Morgantown. An' we'll be over the hills on Jack's heels an' see to it that no jail in Morgantown keeps him overnight!"

While Andy was raising his "army" and looking fruitlessly for Tuleko, dramatic events were happening rapidly on the trail. Once in the pass, Jimmy

and Hans purposely lagged farther and farther behind with their prisoner. When these tactics had put about a mile between themselves and Watkins and the half dozen men who were with him, Jimmy Breed gave Hans a significant look and galloped on ahead.

"Mr. Sevier," Hans said in a low voice, as if he feared for the rocks to hear, "Tipton said we was to drop behind an' I was to open the handcuffs an' pretend they never was locked right an' you broke 'em off you. An' me an' Jimmy was to shoot you dead an' say we did it coz you was tryin' to get away." He brought out the key and unlocked the handcuffs. "An' Mr. Sevier, Jimmy's waitin' ahead with his pistol to shoot you. But I took the ball out of his pistol. He's got his rifle, too; but maybe you can race by him an' catch up with Mr. Watkins. It's the only chance. Mrs. Sevier, she's such a kind lady. She never looked down on me."

"Thanks again, Hans," Sevier said, with a searching look at him. "No, I won't take your pistol. That would be a dead give-away. You couldn't explain it to Tipton—and you've got a good job there."

"I guessed maybe I'd go to Kaintucky," Hans said vaguely. "Jimmy'll know; an' he'll tell Tipton. I was to give a signal so he'd be ready for you, an' I ain't goin' to give it."

"Stay around in the hills a few days till I get back. Then I'll give you a job; and I'll protect you, too." Sevier reached down and grasped Kaf-

fer's hand. Then he let out the reins and took the bend in the trail upward at full gallop.

There had been an invisible and keenly interested spectator of this scene. The Runner's 'possum hunt had taken him far afield! Ever since Tipton's men had entered the pass, he had been crawling along among the rocks high above the trail, keeping Sevier in view—and his rifle ready for the first man who made a treacherous gesture. He saw now that there was no danger from Hans Kaffer. So he hastened on, for he knew that Jimmy Breed was ahead on the trail. He was in time to see Sevier come upon Jimmy at full gallop. Jimmy aimed with his pistol, which, of course, being unloaded, did no harm. Sevier went by him, full tilt, and was out of sight before Jimmy could bring his rifle into play. Tuleko took careful aim at the 'possum he had come out specially to hunt. But just as he fired, Jimmy plunged down the hillside. Before Tuleko could reload, Starlight had carried Jimmy Breed beyond his view. From his peak the Runner could see that Sevier had caught up with Watkins. He debated what to do and decided that he had better return home and report events to his chum, Silent Scot.

He had not gone far when he met Andy with the Renz and La Roche boys and half a dozen of Sevier's sons. These young, eager, and angry lads were riding like mad, armed to the teeth. They made such good time that they reached the jail in Morgantown on the heels of Tipton's men.

"Boys, boys!" Sevier greeted them. "No rash play, now. We're not ruffians."

The sheriff came out and Watkins repeated to him the orders Tipton had given; namely, that John Sevier was to be well guarded because he was a very dangerous man.

"H'm, h'm," the sheriff nodded, with kindling eyes. "Don't I know him for a dangerous man? None needs to tell me that. You remember me, John Sevier? I was with you at King's Mountain." He caught Sevier's two hands and pumped them up and down vigorously in his delight. "Colonel McDowell will be glad to see you," he added, and sent off his son posthaste for McDowell. So it happened that the lawful military commander of the county, Charles McDowell, presently arrived, went bail for the rebel Governor of Franklin, and escorted him first to the inn for a great supper—which was attended by every old King's Mountain man in the county—and then to the entrance of the pass that led homeward to Tennessee.

"Tuleko t'ink better go ahead look for Breed," the Runner said to Andy.

"Ye're right. For Jimmy would pick off Jack from behind a rock an' get away into Carolina—an' Tipton would reward him. He kens that, does Jimmy! The skunk!"

"Tipton 'fraid skunk. T'at's why he no look in Breed cabin when he take Jack boys an' horses. T'at's where Tipton boys."

"Oh! So that's where ye'd hidden Tipton's sons,

eh? An' I've been tryin' for days to get ye to tell! Now ye might as well say who fired yon jail."

"Wind spirit," said Tuleko, grinning. He lashed Ahyuni ahead on the slanting path leading to old Shark's dugout.

Andy followed more slowly, looking cautiously about. Suddenly he saw Jimmy Breed, and realized that Tuleko was in deadly peril. Jimmy was kneeling on the platform roof of the dugout from which the old pirate used, once, to pick off hunters in the valley below. Jimmy could see Tuleko, but Tuleko could not see Jimmy. In a moment, Andy knew, Tuleko would cross an open space directly below the dugout. A much worse shot than Jimmy Breed could hardly miss him.

Andy dismounted swiftly and lifted his rifle into position.

"'Tis the longest shot I've ever tried for," he muttered, "an' I daren't miss it, for Runner's sake." Though it chilled his heart to realize that only his ability to fire straight and true to the mark at so great a distance could save Tuleko, yet it steadied his eye and hand, too.

Crack! The one note of death broke the mountain stillness. Jimmy Breed jerked, swayed, then toppled from the platform and fell several thousand feet down the sheer east side of the rock into the gulch where, some years before, Andy and Tuleko had reunited on their journey south from Pennsylvania.

Urging Brandywine on, Andy presently joined

Tuleko at the dugout. The two friends indulged in one of their bear hugs. Then they started for home, leading Starlight.

"Jack glad get Starlight," said the Runner. It was like them, the Indian and the Scot, to make no more ado there over the end of Jimmy Breed. But, all through his life, Tuleko's favorite wonder tale, which he told to every boy, was the tale of Silent Scot's long shot.

The return of John Sevier caused no joy in John Tipton's heart. He secretly queried of Hans Kaffer how the plan of assassination had failed. Hans put the blame on Jimmy Breed. Jimmy, being dead, could not now trouble Hans, who had a good job caring for Tipton's horses and wanted to keep it. Tipton departed for the Governor's mansion and did not return until he had set afoot a new plot for the ruin of the man he hated. Before it was in force, Tipton had become a senator. Under his influence the Pardon Act was passed exonerating all the men of the now defunct State of Franklin *"except John Sevier."* Never again in his life should John Sevier hold *"any office of profit or honor or trust in the State of North Carolina."*

This news reached old Watauga shortly before an election which was to give the men by the Western Waters more generous representation in the House and Senate. Their answer was to elect John Sevier Senator from Greene County by unanimous vote! Here was a pretty pickle for the Governor, the House, and the Senate. There they were, met

in solemn session to transact the country's business, with crowds surrounding the building and roaring with cheers at Senator John Sevier riding up and down before the sacred door of the Senate he was forbidden to enter. It was unbearable; the mockery of it could not be endured by the sensitive gentlemen within. In spite of Tipton's violent opposition they hastily lifted the ban and invited Sevier to come inside. With all the dignity of a senator in the great days of Rome, Nolichucky Jack entered the Senate and took his seat on the bench beside his foe and colleague from Tennessee. His eyes flashed once with mirth and triumph and he smiled his infectious, crooked smile, as he said affably:

"Well, John, here we both are—for the good of our country."

Sevier was not long a senator. Out of the ashes of Frankland rose the State of Tennessee; and Nolichucky Jack was its first governor.

One very windy day Silent Scot, Old One-Eye, Tuleko, and the twins were gossiping by the roadside near the pass. They were taking their leisurely way home after having helped a newcomer to build his cabin. Suddenly with a wild roar of wind and baying of canine throats, a huge pack of hunting dogs tore through the gap, followed by a man riding a fine racer and leading another. The stranger's hat blew off and landed at Andy's feet. Andy caught it just in time, and ran down to the road with it.

"Here's yer hat," he said, smiling pleasantly at the stranger, who was a young man with snapping

eyes and hair that stood straight up briskly in front.

"Thank ye kindly, sir. Ye're verra obliging," the young man said. Andy smiled.

"Ye're Scotch, too," he remarked warmly.

"Scotch-Irish. I'm from Waxhaw. And I've come to Tennessee to live because I have my ambitions, I may tell you. And this is a country for strong and bold men."

"I kenned a' that when I was sixteen; an' that's why *I* came," Silent Scot replied with a slight trace of rebuke in his tone. It needed no strange young man with a pack of dogs to tell *him* that Tennessee was a land of bold men! The stranger smiled, catching the hint and liking Andy the better for it.

"I'm glad we met, but I must go on now into Jonesborough. What's yer name?"

"Andy MacPhail."

"Is it, now! Mine's Andy, too." He reached down and shook hands cordially. "The rest o' it's Jackson," he added. He nodded again affably and rode on.

"There goes one that thinks pretty much o' himself," Andy remarked, as he rejoined his group. "An' I shouldn't wonder but he's right. He's Scotch, too. Ay, an' a lad o' good parts, I make no doubt. His name's Andy, an' that says a lot for him."

"Never heard tell of 'im," said the Admiral. Old Shark was broiling a steak on the end of his ramrod over the camp fire.

Silent Scot caught the biscuit the Runner tossed

to him and set his teeth into it contentedly. Over him stretched the golden evening sky of Tennessee, dappled with the leafy branches of sycamores and shot through with the bright wings of birds and insects. The hum of tiny life in the grass blended with the hum of brooks. There was an atmosphere of peace now by the Western Waters, where scattered homesteads had become settlements, and settlements, towns. Peace and stability had been won with the rifles and axes and with the courage and industry of such men as John Sevier, the MacPhails, and their like. These had established a local habitation and a name, and reared, upon a solid foundation, a vast and free structure that was ready now to house and to shape a great national figure.

"Runner, if ye've no objection," said Andy, "I'll invite Mr. Andrew Jackson to go huntin' wi' us next week."

"Uh-huh," Runner-on-the-Wind grunted as cordially as he could with his mouth full of the old pirate's steak.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The Mountain Man: The incident of Ferguson's aiming but not firing at Washington is authentic and is related in a letter from Ferguson to an uncle in Scotland in which he says: "It is not a pleasant thing to shoot an unoffending individual in the back who is acquitting himself very coolly of his duty—the idea disgusted me—I am not sorry I did not know at the time who it was." The details regarding Ferguson's marksmanship, his invention of a new rifle, and the loss of his arm at the Battle of the Brandywine are also historic.

The Wolf of the Border: Though delivered under other circumstances, Ferguson's speech to Mrs. Lytle concluding with the offer to accept Col. Lytle's word of honor is supposedly historic. Other historic incidents are the battle of Musgrove's Mill and Ferguson's letter (of which only the gist is given here) sent by a paroled prisoner to the Overhill men.

King's Mountain: Those parts of the story relating to the Battle of King's Mountain—Sevier's letter to Gates, the means whereby the army was equipped, the muster at Sycamore Shoals, the discovery that two Wataugan Tories had ridden ahead to warn Ferguson, the crossing by a new trail, the election of Campbell, the mad ride of eighteen hours, the way the battle was fought, and the manner of Ferguson's death—are historic.

Dragging Canoe's War: The characters of Dragging Canoe and the Tipton brothers, the incident of the trader's letter, the arrival in Chota of emissaries from distant tribes with the great war belt (see North Carolina *Colonial Records,* vol. x, p. 658), and Jonathan Tipton's failure to obey Sevier's order, resulting in the escape of the Chickamaugans, are historic.

The Land of the Free: The historical events *re* the founding of the first Western state have been brought together into one day for the purposes of the narrative.

Silent Scot's Long Shot: Tipton's feud with Sevier, his attempt to hang Sevier's sons, the circumstances of Sevier's arrest and the plot to murder him are historic. Tradition says that Jackson arrived in Tennessee in the manner described.